

# Black Roses

Renzo Novatore

1920

I was lying on my purple bed — I don't know for how long — , but I couldn't relax. My temples throbbed, my forehead burned as if with fever, in my brain a jumble of murky thoughts whirled, and, cursing, I vainly implored Morpheus to gather me up in his arms.

Suddenly, I saw the door of my room burst open, and gently, an *Unpredictable* entered.

I looked at her: her beautiful, deep eyes held all the secrets of the sky and all the mysteries of the seas. Her hair was long and blond. The perfume of the ripe pomegranate wafted from her mouth, awaiting the eager bite. Her rosy hands were fine and transparent, and her tiny feet were white and graceful.

Who was she? I don't know. Only she was different from the other *Unpredictable* who had already appeared to me.

She approached me smiling and sweetly ran her slender fingers through my long and unkempt hair.

"My sweet one, my poor mad man," she said to me, "why do you always torment yourself so? Don't you see that your black hair is already turning whit at the temples? Don't you see that your poor eyes are popping out of your head and that your facial muscles change the cast of your features into the twinge of a violent contraction? Don't you see how you are transfigured? Why this futile and endless torment of yours? Am I not the one you dreamed of, the one you waited for? Here I am!

"Ah, come, come with me, my poor man, my tender love.

"You love flights, deep seas, eternal noons. I know! I know, and I understand you.

"Come! Come! I have a fragrant scent, virginity and youth... I have an aura of intangible beauty, visions and dreams within me...

"Come with me! I will take you far, far away, into my noble house: a white cloud wandering in the regions of the sun.

"A magical wind of divine madness will emanate from the *Unknown* to rock us on the waves of a radiant dream.

"We will have a bed of white flowers that will never wither, and we will be happy, happy...

"I will strip off my fantastic veil, lie down at your fit and play on my lyre for you, the most beautiful music that has ever been play."

I had to be pale and thoughtful at that moment!

The *Unpredictable* spoke, she spoke without pause, and her gentle words penetrated into the deepest part of my mind like sweet music, like an infinite song.

My heart was moved, and my eyes were bathed in tears.

Meanwhile, the tiny hand kept running through the forest of my hair.

"My poor friend," she went on, "you are ill, very ill... but I will heal you, at least I hope to."

I reached out my bony hands, damp with cold sweat, to grasp that blond head and pull it against my panting breast.

"Ah! no... Not now," she told me, "when we get up there."

\* \* \*

What a tragic thing life is! What a horrendous conquest, tomorrow!

The very evening that followed the apparition was the most terrible I had ever passed through.

I left with the *Unpredictable*, and we wandered the whole night together in silence, and the whole following morning. In the afternoon, we reached the white cloud in the golden regions of the sun. The *Unpredictable* kept her promise... She removed the ruddy veil that covered her body, and naked and pale she offered herself to my greedy eyes. She loosened the curls of her blond hair and it fell on her snowy shoulders, and, squatting at my feet, she took up her lyre and sang me the most beautiful song that a human being could hear.

She sang while she looked fixedly into my gaping eyes as if she were searching there for my soul.

I was overcome, intoxicated, I kissed her savagely, brutally on her moist mouth of fragile rose.

Ah! fatal kiss...

Her face turned purple-blue, her eyes glazed over, the fire of her beautiful pupils was spent and her adorable body stiffened in my arms.

She was dead!

Had I just killed her? Had she wanted to die?

...

Now my muse is ringed in black, and my lyre plays funeral dirges. A black veil covers my emotions.

I feel that my mind would like to free itself once more beyond the borders of sorrow in search of the paths that lavish summer quilts with herbs and flowers; but *Fate*, against which man powerlessly roars and represses his rage, has mortally wounded her. Then the flowers — the beautiful white flowers — withered for her and the clouds dispersed — the beautiful house of dreams — and clasping the corpse of the *Unpredictable*, I fell into the abyss.

A funeral march echoed inside me. Perhaps, tomorrow, I too will be dead.

Now I can no longer laugh at anything or anyone; I am alone with my sorrow. I believe that I am a flower born in the field of death, because I feel within myself the deadly and anguished moan of all the deceased.

Yes, I still feel the warm kiss of the sun and the caresses of the wind in my hair, but the illness — my real illness — comes from roots that still cling to the land in which I was born.

Others — those like me — are already dead or will die tomorrow, but she who should not have died is now dead.

And my *illness* is such that now I see the whole face of reality.

Unsatisfied, therefore, with the world of men, I develop the desire for a life that I have not lived and that perhaps no one could live. My forehead is ringed with large black roses: the roses of death. Iconoclasts, laugh, a funeral passes.

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Renzo Novatore  
Black Roses  
1920

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# Cry of Rebellion

Renzo Novatore

August 10, 1917

Dedicated to the rabble.

*The fall of peoples and of humanity  
will be the signal of my elevation.* — Max Stirner

The restless, questioning spirit of the new human beings can no longer nurture themselves on Socrates' historical hemlock and Christ's legendary cross.

These two sacrifices, which have now fortunately fallen into the deep chasms of a shadowy past, were — undoubtedly — consummated completely at the expense of vigorous individualities, straining and throbbing manifestations of free life.

And I profess that, in contrast to Socrates and Christ, Diogenes himself seems to me to be a truly great innovator, since his wine cask has a different and much deeper meaning than Socrates' hemlock or Christ's cross.

But if Socrates and Christ, with their useless deaths, struck genuine individual potentialities until they bled horribly, wouldn't all revolutions following their path do the same?

Didn't christianity triumph over the nearly enviable pagan society through a revolutionary dynamic?

And all the liberal, constitutional, absolutist or... democratic republics, empires or monarchies, weren't they all born from torrents of blood, undulating over the scorched lands of war and revolution?

But why did the violent and feverish pulse of every revolution ever shatter, always freely, allowing new phantoms to arise again as sovereign rulers?

The answer is certainly not long in coming since no one will find it hard to understand that all revolutions were domesticated in various ways, and revolutionaries — with the exception of the smallest minority, the "madmen" — were always automatons guided by chimerical and fabulous phantoms.

But what value could those phantoms have for me? What use is any of this to me? To me, the Iconoclast, the killer of phantoms, the demolisher of old and new idols?

What use, for example, could the triumph of christianity be to me? To me, the ultimate anti-christian?

And republics and monarchies, and all the other forms of society that rise as "sacred" sovereigns and can only recognize the "christian", the "subject", the "citizen", the "member", etc.,

etc., in me? Since I don't consider it hard to understand that in every form of society there must be a "system", indeed, this system, the best of the best: Equality!

But every "sacred" system and all that is Sacred, whether divinely or humanly, demand renunciation and humiliation from me, the Individual. But that's not all.

Because every form of society, born from the fragments of the old one that fell resoundingly into the void, has the conviction that it is the only perfect one. And it is precisely this dogma of perfection that drives to be so utterly reactionary toward the restless Rebel who does not at all intend to bow before the new God: today, for example, if the revolt against the depot of all Russia finds approval and justification in the foul local papers, they wouldn't approve or justify a damned thing if such a revolt were to break in... the snow-white bosom of... liberal and democratic Italy. Quite the opposite.

But let's take another step forward. Let's suppose, for example, that tomorrow a Republic is proclaimed in Italy. In such a case, wouldn't a very large portion of those who pretend to be furiously revolutionary today, themselves be the fiercest reactionary conservatives of tomorrow?

And if some "hothead", some "madman", some "enthusiasts" would want to undermine their new edifice, their brand new God once again? But here I think that I might hear certain good — perhaps too good — people exclaim: But then, isn't he an enemy of the Revolution?! — No, no. Oh, good people, listen to me again since I am so revolutionary that I barely even recognize myself! And do you know why I am a revolutionary who can barely be recognized? For a reason so simple that it is great in its simplicity. Here it is: because I am a revolutionary guided only by the vast and uncontrollable impulse of MY expansion of will and potential.

There is no phantom guiding me, but rather there I am, walking. There is no chimerical dream of a perfect society of universal human redemption, but rather there is the absolute need for my potential affirmation before other potentialities.

God, the State, Society, Humanity, etc., etc. have their own cause for themselves. If I don't want to subjugate myself God's cause, I am a "sinner". If I don't want to submit to the State, Society, Humanity, I am a "wicked man", a "criminal", a "delinquent".

But what is "sin"? What is "crime"?

Here again, I don't think there is any need for a long and complicated digression to analyze all this, since even children must know by now that the most serious sin that you can commit against divinity is to mock it, not obey it, desecrate it and deny it. In short, desecrating what is divinely and humanly "sacred" is the greatest "sin", the greatest "crime".

"Sacred"! This is the most monstrous and terrible phantom before which all have trembled up to now.

Here is the old, harsh tablet that the new human beings must shatter!

The FREE SPIRITS, the ICONOCLASTS, all those who have finally discovered in "sin" and "crime" the new spring from which the highest synthesis of life gushes.

And even the rabble, when it learns to quench its thirst at this new, unknown spring, will very quickly realize that it too is a granite potentiality.

But to do this, the rabble will have to stop letting itself be ruled by fear.

Oh, rabble, listen to me! I am not the new Christ come to sacrifice myself on the altar of your redemption. If I did this, I would be a madman and you would be a beggar.

I put my lips to your profane ear and launch a cry. A frightening cry that will make you grow pale. The cry that I launch is that of the great German rebel, Max Stirner. So listen to it, since only by virtue of this magic cry will you vanish as rabble in order to rise up again in the flowering

potential of all of your individualized members. Here is the magic cry: “The egoist has always affirmed himself with crime and, with sacrilegious hand, has pulled the sacred idols down from their pedestals. It is necessary to put an end to the sacred; or better still: the need to violate the sacred must become general. It is not a new revolution that approaches; but a mighty, impetuous, superb, shameless, consciousnessless crime sounds in the thunder on the horizon. Don’t you see how already the foreboding sky grows dark and silent?”

But here again, oh rabble, I see you back away and shout at me with horror: “What ever is this crime? What does he mean by all this?”

Ah, rabble, rabble! Do you still not understand his speech?

Well, then, listen again. He’s the one who’s speaking: “Put your hand on whatever you need. Take it; it is yours. This is the declaration of the war of all against all. I alone am the judge of what I want to have.” Now do you understand, oh rabble, what the crime that SOUNDS IN THE THUNDER ON THE HORIZON is? But you, oh rabble, may not yet know how to adapt yourself to the idea of eternal war, you who have cradled yourself like a poor baby in the sweet dreams of eternal peace. And who even knows how many idols you still have to worship and on whose altars you still have to sacrifice yourself!

Poor rabble!

And to think that even the blind would have to notice by now that anyone who isn’t able to accept eternal war as his affirmation and triumph must accept eternal slavery for the triumph of fabulous phantoms, declared enemies of the I.

Yes, oh rabble, I have decided, yet again, to be completely sincere with you. And this is what my sincerity tells you — Today, you sacrifice yourself in blood-soaked trenches for a cause that is not your own. Tomorrow you may sacrifice yourself in lands made bloody by Revolution in order to later allow a new parasitic and corroding worm to rise on the seas of blood that streamed out in hot steaming spurts from your bronze veins so that a new idol could be raised up to sit over you just like the old God.

The consecrated chorus of Love, Pity and social Right will return, making itself heard, skillfully played on new harps, components of the most ancient symphony.

Rabble, listen to me! I still have something more to tell you. What I still have to tell you may well be the thing that weighs on me the most.

So here I am. I am UNIQUE and as long as you remain rabble, I will not be able to associate with you. When I do so, it will be in order to draw you out against my enemy who is your master. But as rabble, you will not allow yourself to be drawn out since you still adore your Lord too much.

You still want to go on living on your knees. But I have understood life.

And anyone who understands life cannot live on his knees.

I have even understood all the traps that the owners of all this have set for me.

When they saw me march boldly to the conquest of my life, armed with all my uninhibited potentiality, they placed before my eager eyes all of their ridiculous and insane phantoms.

They tried to terrorize me with the hobgoblins of the “sacred”, but since I, the Iconoclast, the Impious one, scorn and mock all that is “sacred” and “consecrated”, and since, like Armida, I destroy the palace in which once I had to suffer enchantment, they threw off their sacred mask and launched themselves against me, imposing the most extreme against me.

That was the day, oh rabble, that I had the true revelation of what life is and what place my *Uniqueness* would have in this.

Now I live on my feet. My eye no longer knows sleep.  
 I recognize no one's rights against me. Only force can defeat me now, not phantoms.  
 I said, only force can defeat me. But I also use it. I no longer ask anyone for anything.  
 I am no beggar.  
 I only appropriate everything that I have empowered myself to appropriate through the capacity of my potentiality.  
 My revolution already started a long time ago.  
 From the moment I knew life, I took up MY weapons and declared MY war.  
 I struggle for a cause that is my own. No other cause can interest me anymore.  
 My enemies also struggle for a cause that is *their own* and against me.  
 But I don't hate them for this.  
 The REAL interests that they have in fighting against me exempts them from my hatred since I have taken up my weapons against them only due to my REAL interests.  
 I may very well kill them for my triumph, but without hating them, without despising them; I am not struggling for phantoms!  
 Rather I despise beggars, misers, all those who don't dare to fight, but who only know how to beg and weep.  
 They are the ones who beg for fallen crumbs from the sumptuous table of my enemy.  
 And with these misers of body and spirit my enemy creates a blind and formidable power to launch against me in the battle that has started between we *Egoists*.  
 But what could these misers ever gain from the victory over me brought back by my enemy, i.e., by their master? Nothing more than the usual crumbs and eternal slavery!  
 But what are you then, oh rabble, if not the blind, unconscious, begging mass that launches yourself against me in defense of your Lord? Listen to me, oh rabble, you must vanish *as such*, you must have no place in the theater of new life.  
 Do you sneer? Are you maybe lashing out at me?  
 Could it be that with the blows of my lash I have succeeded in awakening an inner residue of pride in you that slept hidden in the remote corners of your mind that has been servile for centuries?  
 Already in the distance you can hear the war trumpet sound announcing the invincible attacks of the Unique ones against the phantoms: the State, Society, God, Humanity...  
 You turn pale and flee, dragging all your satellites into the abyss of the eternal void; and the rebellious phalange of Free Spirits and Iconoclasts advances into the stormy sky of the Future!



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Renzo Novatore  
Cry of Rebellion  
August 10, 1917

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# In the Circle of Life

In Memory of Bruno Filippi

Renzo Novatore

1920

*The people who desire to be themselves  
never know where they are going.*

.....

*The final outcome of knowledge consists in recognizing  
that the soul of man is unknowable.*

Without being an imitator of rabid Papinian<sup>1</sup> cynicism or a superficial and perfumed "voluptuary" like Guido Da Verona; without feeling the ironic skepticism and the sorrowful bitterness of Mario Mariani on my lips; I feel and affirm that life cannot be at all worthy of the name if we do not live it as Artists, as Rebels, as Heroes.

Schopenhauer, in his powerful and frightful volumes of metaphysics, is anxious to show us that Life is sad and that for this reason it isn't worth the trouble of living it. But the art drawn from the most profound and lyrical human sorrow throbs to exalt the heroic Beauty that in the divinatory exaltation of symbol is transfigured by creative joy that shows us savage purity, that sheds light on the loving spirit, that teaches us to live Life madly. If politics, socialism, christianity, humanism, logic, coherence, right, duty, just and unjust, good and evil, truth and justice, are already boring, vacuous, and slumbering things, phantoms that have grown dim and vanished in the anthropocentric sun of the unique negator; parodies of a dying civilization that inspires nausea, repugnance, and contempt in us; Art teaches us the great love of Life. We have the need to love it "up to the annihilation of being". Sorrow and Anguish are the pure fountain of pulsating Beauty for Art. It is in the sulfurous chasms of Sorrow that Art lays its luminous roots in order to be able to fling the verdant happiness of its branches high among the mysterious conflicts of the winds, in the dance of Sun and Light where dreams, hope, and Beauty are founded on a tragic song of happiness and Greatness.

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<sup>1</sup> Papini was an old Italian author, apparently known for his cynicism.

Yes! Every snow-covered peak that sings polyphonic symphonies of music and poetry, of love and beauty, on high amidst the ethereal purity of light and the golden caresses of the Sun, still rises from a dark abyss. Thus is Life! Sorrow is our creative abyss, Joy and Happiness our mighty dream!

Even if sorrow does not make us better, “I think”—says Nietzsche—“that it makes us deeper.” And in the mysterious depths of our being the unknowable enigma toils and hides itself. Hour by hour, moment by moment, it transmutes itself from unknown emotion to known thought, luminous and brilliant, that flashes its darting rays on virgin, purple peaks of revelatory knowledge.

And then, just as vast and glittering strings of stars wandering in the clarity of a cloudless night are reflected in the deep blue of a tranquil sea, so the happiness created by and for ourselves is reflected, smiling, in the sad sea of our sorrow; of this our sorrow that gave us Life!

We must never stop bringing our thoughts out of our sorrow and maternally giving them that within us which is of blood, of heart, of fire, of joy, of passion, of anguish, of knowledge, of destiny, of fatality.

*“Life for us is to change all that we are and all that touches us into light and flame, because we cannot do otherwise.”* This is the circle—perhaps much too limited—of Life where we are perpetually knocked down without being able to escape except through the silent paths of Death! But Death does not frighten or terrorize us. On the contrary! We who proceed out of the Unknown of eternity and go toward the eternity of the Unknown have learned to look upon Death like any moment of our Life. And this is our most beautiful, our most sublime mystery! This is the final word of knowledge. The unknowable!

And it is from this our unknowable singularity that the powerful and diabolical voice of our ravenous desires rises. Desires of youthful flesh eager for pleasure, the cry of the spirit panting for unlimited freedom, mad flights of the mind through the distant, unexplored unknown; howls and ferocious blasphemies of our galloping and vagabond thought colliding with the much too mysterious walls of eternity, triumphant and dionysian songs of a Life seen dimly through the delirium of a dream, a dream composed of a Whole lost and wandering in a Void. And in the void Death waits for us. This Death that is ours as Life is ours. This Death that we love!

But one should not be lowered into the grave with a heart swollen with sadness and weeping. It is necessary first to have lived in intensely as Artists, as Rebels, as Heroes, without ever having bathed in the bitter waters of repentance that flow in christian rivers. The true original and spirited sinner should not die drowning in the slimy whirlpools of a slimier remorse, but rather enveloped in the rosy blaze of the greatest sin. Before dying, we must be consumed to the last quivering spark of our luxuriant thought, having made a feast of the world and an infinite pleasure of action. Before dying, it is necessary—as Emerson said—to feel everything become familiar to us, every event useful, every day holy, every person divine. Then? “Then comes the nausea, the repugnance, the loathing,” says Bruno Filippi, and then one “dares” and daring one goes with a calm and bright spirit toward the silent realm of Death

where the mind is dispersed in the vast stillness of the Void and matter decomposes in order to live another type of unknown life in the atoms. But for us even Death should be a vigorous manifestation of Life, Art, and Beauty!

The Hero of Life goes toward Death accompanied by the tragically triumphal march of dynamite and the head encircled with flowers. Yes, anyone who has desired and been able to live as Rebel and Hero wants the freedom to burn in a beautiful blaze ignited by the greatest sin so that the prelude to death is nothing but a sweet and melancholy poem kissing a red dawn where the voice of Orpheus blends with the sobs of Prometheus and the roaring, bacchic laughter of Dionysus resounds.

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I admire Corrado Brando<sup>2</sup> with iconoclastic enthusiasm and atheistic religiosity even if his creator has not known how to die in time and has allowed the long rain of time to fall on his mind miraculously consuming and withering it; even though it was necessary to get drunk on the virgin and dangerous zarathustrian fountains gushing from the dizzying peaks of the merry and playful nietzschian solitude; even if the shitty little Catos<sup>3</sup> of that putrid Thais, of the hateful Circe called Morality, flee in horror before him. Because Corrado Brando did not glorify crime as the fat and skinny idiots claim, but—with appropriate marks of the tragic art—the efficacy and dignity of crime conceived as promethean virtue are manifested. But while I admire this vigorous creature who blossomed luxuriously through the pagan mystery of the homerically tragic art that, as a symbol of sublime heroic beauty, exalts itself above the sky of Shadow and of Night as the fatal announcement of a brilliant dawn of blood, fire, and light, I see “the anarchic individual” standing out from the grey twilight of reality, “he who obeys only his own law” in order to “open the passage with bomb explosions” and live life crying like the god of the rynerian parable: “I love you and freely desire you, oh my Necessity!” It is Bruno Filippi! Spirit has made itself Thought, Thought has made itself Flesh in order to reappear as symbol. The tragic Hero of action has made himself the artist of Life in order to transmute himself into the Poet of the deed, as strong and implacable as the fatality of Destiny. Like the D’Annunzian Hero. He too said with his action: “The proof of my dignity is in the invisible miracle.” And just as in Corrado Brando, the intoxication of the will had accumulated in him as a Dionysian frenzy. Like the protagonist of *More Than Love*, he also teaches us the fury and the whirlwind, because in him as well “the tempest raised all the forces of the soul and, tossing them about, it slammed them against a solid granite wall.” Like all of the few frantic lovers of Life, he was a heroic poet of the deed who in the destruction of himself and of his Misfortunes created a tragic song to the “triumph of the imperishable will”, to the cult of eternal Joy and Beauty. He offered all the corroding and luminous flames of his ardent, sorrowful, and tortured mind. He, Bruno Filippi, in the delirious impulse of his annihilation, wanted to make the most intimate and sublime Sin acknowledge Life. Then he dissolved in the Void, a luminous and wandering voice that remains for us, incessantly whispering: “Dare,

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<sup>2</sup> A character from a novel by Gabrielle D’Annunzio.

<sup>3</sup> The Roman orator, Cato, was known for his rigid moralism.

dare!" And at the desperately serene cry of this symbolic twenty year old voice, it seems to us that the romantically scented pagan earth smiles at us with a lyrical and amorous smile, saying to us: "hasten destiny and come to rest in my turgid breast, swollen with fruitful seeds." Since he was a poet, Bruno Filippi heard this voice. He heard it and he answered: *Oh good earth!...I will come, I will come on the great day and you will welcome me into your arms, good, fragrant earth, and you will make the timid violets blossom on my head.* Now that Bruno Filippi has taken all the roses and thoughts germinated in the vermilion garden of his spring winds into the grave, rejoicing in strength and youth, in will and mystery, "Oh earth, take back this body and recall what was strong for your future labors." Because I see in Him as well the "necessity of the crime that burdens the resolute man elevating him at last to the titanic condition."

Who was he? Where was he going?

Fools! And where have you gone? Where are you going?

He was broken while breaking the chains that you, united in a cowardly and hateful way in your manifold quality as dangerous lunatics, riveted logically and morally to his twenty year old rebel wrists in order to crush his Uniqueness, his mystery, because he was incomprehensible to you, precisely as the complicated mind of one who feels complete in himself must be. Bruno Filippi hated. But the forces of Hatred did not crush the powers of Love within Him. He immolated himself in a fruitful embrace with death because he madly loved Life. We have the need and the entitlement to say of him that which was said of the D'Annunzian hero: "That the slaves of the marketplace turn around and remember!"

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Renzo Novatore  
In the Circle of Life  
In Memory of Bruno Filippi  
1920

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# In The Reign of The Phantoms

Renzo Novatore

1921

*"There existed nothing more than Beauty and Strength but the brutes and the weak invented, to equalize themselves, Justice."*

Raffaele Valente

I believed it was a frightening dream and instead it's a bloody reality.

I am besieged and compressed within a twofold circle of the obsessed and mad.

The world is one pestulant church covetous and slimy where all have an idol to fetishistically adore and an altar on which to sacrifice themselves.

Also those who ignited the iconoclastic pyre in order to burn the cross on which the man God was nailed, they have still not understood either the outcry of life nor the roar of Freedom.

After Jesus Christ, from the pit of his legend, spit on the face of humanity the most bloody insult urging it to negate itself in order to approach God, the French Revolution came which with ferocious irony made the same appeal proclaiming the "rights of the man".

With Christ and the French Revolution the man is imperfect. The cross of Christ symbolizes the POSSIBILITY to become MAN, the "rights of the man" symbolize the very same thing. In order to achieve perfection you must divinize for the first one, to humanize for the second one.

But the one and the other are in accord in proclaiming the imperfection of the individual-man, of the royal self, asserting that only through the realization of the ideal, can man rise to the magical summits of perfection.

Christ says to you: if you will patiently await the desolate calvary to then nail yourself on the cross, becoming the image of ME that is the ManGod, you will be the perfect human creature worthy of sitting at the right of my father who is in the kingdom of heaven.

And the French Revolution says to you: I have proclaimed the rights of man.

If you will enter devoutly in the symbolic cloister of human social justice to sublimate and humanize through the moral canon of social life, you will be a citizen and I will give you the rights I proclaimed to man.

But who dared to throw to the flames the cross where is hung the man-God and the tables where are obliquely recorded the rights of the man in order then to rest on the virgin and granitic mass of free force, the epicentric axis of individual life, would be one wicked and evil against whom would be turned the bloody jaws of the two sinister phantoms: the divine and the human.

At right the sulfuric flames and eternal pit of the hell that punishes SIN, on the left deaf creaking of the guillotine which condemns CRIME.

The cold and inanimate cowardice of human fear, germinated from the theorization of a mystical and sick sentiment, finally has succeeded to prevail over the healthy and primitive instinctive and animated INJUSTICE that was only Force and Beauty, Youth and Ardor.

Progress (?) and Civilization (?), Religion (?) and the Ideal (?), have closed life in a mortal circle where the phantoms most grim have erected their viscid reign. Time to to end it! We must break the circle violently and exit.

If the chimeras of the divine legends have influenced the human history terribly and if human history wants the mutilation of the royalinstinctive man in order to follow its course: we are rebels! It is not our fault if from the symbolic wounds of Christ are spraying the purulent drops of matter upon the red disc of humanity, to then generate it's infected civil rot which proclaims the rights of man. If men want to rot in the systematic caverns of social putrefaction then they are accommodated well. We will not be there to liberate them!

But we love the Sun and want to freely contort in pangs of its hot and most violent kiss.

\* \* \*

If I look around myself I want to vomit.

On one side the scientist whom I must believe in order not to be ignorant. From the other the moralist and the philosopher from whom I must accept the commandments in order to not be a brute.

Then comes the Genius whom I must glorify and after the hero to whom I must bow affectedly. Then the companion comes and the friend, the idealist and the materialist, the atheist and the believer and all other infinity of monkeys definite and indefinite that want to give their good councils to me and to place me, finally, on the one good path. Because naturally that the path which I was on is a mistaken path, as mistaken as my ideas, my thought, my everything. I am a mistaken man.

They poor fools are all pervading from the idea that life has called them to you to be official clergymen on the altar of the great mission, because humanity is called towards a great destiny.

These poor and compassionate animals disfigured by false ideals and transfigured from madness, have not ever been able to comprehend the tragic miracle and play of life, as they have not been able to ever notice that humanity is not at all called to any great destiny. If they had understood anything of that, they would have at least learned that the so called nonsimilar does not will at all to break off the spinal bone in order to ride the abyss that separates one from the other.

But I am that which I am, I do not care what.

And the croaks of these other multicolor carrion crows are not needed to repair my personal and noble wisdom. Hear not, apostolic monkeys of humanity and social divinity, any rumblings from your phantoms above?

Hear, hear! It is the satient pelting of my furious laughter, that which is in the echoes!



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Renzo Novatore  
In The Reign of The Phantoms  
1921

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# **My Iconoclastic Individualism**

Renzo Novatore

1920

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## 1

Even the purest springs of Life and Thought that gush fresh and laughing among the rocks of the highest mountains to quench the thirst of Nature's chosen ones, when discovered by the demagogic shepherds of the hybrid bourgeois and proletarian flocks, quickly become fetid, filthy, slimy pools. Now it is individualism's turn! From the vulgar scab to the idiotic and repulsive cop, from the miserable sell-out to the despicable spy, from the cowardly slave afraid to fight to the repugnant and tyrannical authority, all speak of individualism.

It is in fashion!

Scrawny pseudo-intellectuals of tubercular liberal conservatism, like the chronic democratic syphilitics, and even the eunuchs of socialism and the anemics of communism, all speak and pose as Individualists!

I understand that since Individualism is neither a school nor a party, it cannot be "unique", but it is truer still that Unique ones are individualists. And I leap as a unique one onto the battlefield, draw my sword and defend my personal ideas as an extreme individualist, as an indisputable Unique one, since we can be as skeptical and indifferent, ironic and sardonic as we desire and are able to be. But when we are condemned to hear socialists more or less theorizing in order to impudently and ignorantly state that there is no incompatibility between Individualist and collectivist ideas, when we hear someone stupidly try to make a titanic poet of heroic strength, a dominator of human, moral and divine phantoms, who quivers and throbs, rejoices and expands himself beyond the good and evil of Church and State, Peoples and Humanity, in the strange flickering of a new blaze of unacknowledged love, like Zarathustra's lyrical creator, pass as a poor and vulgar prophet of socialism, when we hear someone try to make an invincible and unsurpassable iconoclast like Max Stirner out to be some tool for the use of frantic proponents of communism, then we may certainly have an ironic smirk on our lips. But then it is necessary to resolutely rise up to defend ourselves and to attack, since anyone who feels that he is truly individualist in principle, means and ends cannot tolerate being at all confused with the unconscious mobs of a morbid, bleating flock.

## 2

Individualism, as I feel, understand and mean it, has neither socialism, nor communism, nor humanity for an end. Individualism is its own end. Minds atrophied by Spencer's positivism still go on believing that they are individualists without noticing that their venerated teacher is the ultimate anti-individualist, since he is nothing more than a radical monist, and, as such, the passionate lover of unity and the sworn enemy of particularity. Like all more or less monistic scientists and philosophers, he denies all distinctions, all differences. And he sacrifices reality to affirm illusion. He strives to show reality as illusion and illusion as reality. Since he isn't able to understand the varied, the particular, he sacrifices the one or the other on the altar of the universal. Sure, he fights the state in the name of the individual, but like every sociologist in this world, he comes back to sacrifice under the tyranny of another free and perfect society, since it is

true that he fights against the state, but he fights against it only because the state as it is doesn't function as he would like.

But not because he has understood the anti-collectivist, anti-social singularities capable of higher activities of the spirit, of emotion and of heroic and uninhibited strength. He hates the state, but does not penetrate or understand the mysterious, aristocratic, vagabond, rebel individual!

And from this point of view, I don't know why that flabby charlatan, that failed anthropologist, bloated more and more with the sociology of Darwin, Comte, Spencer and Marx, who has spread filth over the giants of Art and Thought like Nietzsche, Stirner, Ibsen, Wilde, Zola, Huysman, Verlaine, Mallarmé, etc., that charlatan called Max Nordau; I repeat, I cannot explain to myself why he hasn't also been called an Individualist... since, like Spencer, Nordau also fights the state...

### 3

Giovanni Papini said this about Spencer: "As a scientist, he bowed before facts, as a metaphysician, before the unknowable, as moralist, before the immutable fact of natural laws. His philosophy is made up of fear, ignorance and obedience: great virtues in the presence of Christ, but tremendous vices for one who wants the supremacy of the individual. He was neither more nor less than a counterfeiter of individualism." And though I am not at all a Papinian, in this case, I am in complete agreement with him.

### 4

E. Zocchi is an intellectual of the greatest range with a deep knowledge of anarchist thought, but he declares himself to be a pathetic, moral bourgeois. In his colossal study, *Anarchy*, after railing — though calmly and with some reason — against the greatest agitators of anarchist thought, from Stirner to Tucker, Proudhon to Bakunin, he feels sorry for Kropotkin because he finds that this anarchist was not able to develop a new rigorously scientific and sociological anarchism as he allowed himself to call all the mad delinquents of extreme anarchism, or Individualism, back to the sane currents of a viscous positivistic, scientifically materialist and humanist, semi-Spencerian system, since this famous science is what finally discovered the nullity of the individual "before the limitless immensity...". And for the positivist, humanist, communist, scientific Kropotkin it also seems that man is "a small being with ridiculous pretenses" and amen! Anyone who concentrates on sociology can't be anything but a scientist of collectivity who forgets the individual in order to seek Humanity and raise the Imperial Throne at whose feet the I must renounce itself and kneel down with deep emotion.

And when all anarchists have this sublime concept of life, E. Zocchi will also be happy and content, since by taking on the seraphic pose of a prophet who tells men: "I have come to offer you the possibility of a new life!", he turns to us and says: "May anarchists return to (legal) right and may right expect them, quick to extend its safeguards to them as well..."

But what is right?

We say with Stirner:

*“Right is the spirit of society. If Society has a will, this will is simply Right: Society exists only through Right. But as it endures only exercising a sovereignty over individuals right is its sovereign will. Aristotle says justice is the fruit of society.”*

But “all existing right is — foreign law [Right]; some one makes me out to be right, ‘does right by me’. But should I therefore be in the right if all the world made me out so? And yet what else is the right that I obtain in the state, in society, but a right of those foreign to me? When a blockhead makes me out in the right, I grow distrustful of my rightness; I don’t like to receive it from him. But, even when a wise man makes me out in the right, I nevertheless am not in the right on that account. Whether I am in the right is completely independent of the fool’s making out and the wise man’s”. Now we add to this definition of the Right that this wild, invincible German gave us, the famous aphorism of Protagoras: “The man is the measure of all things”, and then we can go to war against all external right, all external justice, since “justice is the fruit of society”.

## 5

I know! I know and understand: my ideas — which are not new — might wound the overly sensitive hearts of modern humanists, who proliferate in great abundance among subversives, and of romantic dreamers of a radiant, redeemed and perfect humanity, dancing in an enchanted realm of general, collective happiness to the music of a magic flute of endless peace and universal brotherhood. But anyone who chases phantoms wanders far from the truth, and then it is known that the first to be burnt in the flames of my corroding thought was my inner being, my true self! Now within the burning blaze of my Ideas, I also become a flame, and I burn, I scorch, I corrode...

Only those who enjoy contemplating seething volcanoes that launch sinister, exploding lava from their fiery wombs toward the stars, later letting them fall into the Void or among Dead Cities of cowardly men, my carrion brothers, making them run in frantic flight out from their moldy wall-papered shacks, hellholes of rancid, old ideals, should approach me.

I think, I know, that as long as there are men, there will be societies, since this putrid civilization with its industries and mechanical progress has already brought us to the point where it is not even possible to turn back to the enviable age of the caves and divine mates who raised and defended those born of their free and instinctive love like tawny, catlike Lionesses, inhabiting magnificent, fragrant, green and wild forests. But still I know and I think with equal certainty that every form of society — precisely because it is a society — will, for its own good, want to humiliate the individual. Even communism that — as its theorists tell us — is the most humanly perfect form of society would only be able to recognize one of its more or less active, more or less esteemed members in me. I can never be as worthy through communism as I will be as myself, fully my own, as a Unique one and, therefore, incomprehensible to the collectivity. But that within me which is most incomprehensible, most mysterious and enigmatic to the collectivity is precisely my most precious treasure, my dearest good, since it is my deepest intimacy which I alone can explain and love, since I alone understand it.

It would be enough, for example, if I said to communism: “it is to do nothing that the elect exist” as Oscar Wilde said, to see me driven out from the holy supper of the new Gods like a leprous Siberian! And yet one who had the urgent need to live his life in the highly and sublimely intellectual and spiritual atmosphere of Thought and contemplation could not give anything

materially or morally useful and good to the community, because what he could give would be incomprehensible, and therefore noxious and unacceptable, since he could only give a strange doctrine supporting the joy of living in contemplative laziness. But in a communist society — as in any other society where it would be even worse — such a doctrine could have the effect of corruption among the phalanx of those that must produce for collective and social maintenance and balance. No! Every form of society is the product of the majority. For great Geniuses and for great lawbreakers, there is no place within the triumphant mediocrity that dominates and commands.

## 6

Someone will raise the objection to me that in this vermillion Dawn, this noble eve of armies and war, where the vibrant and fateful notes of the great twilight of the old Gods already echoes resoundingly, while on the horizon, the golden rays of a smiling future are already rising, it is not good to bring certain intimate and delinquent thoughts into the light of the sun. It is an old and stupid story! I am twenty-eight years old, for fifteen years I have been active in the libertarian camp and I live anarchistically, and I am told the same things, the very same things all the time:

“For the love of harmony...”

“For the love of getting the word out...”

“For the next redemptive Social Revolution...”

“For...” but why go on!

Enough! I cannot remain silent!

*“If I were to keep a still unpublished manuscript locked up in my drawer, the manuscript of a most beautiful work that would give the reader thrills of unknown pleasure and would uncover unknown worlds; if I were certain that men would grow pale with fear over these pages, and then slowly wander through deserted pathways with eyes fiercely dilated in the void, and later would cynically seek death when madness didn’t run to meet them with its sinister laughter like the roaring of winds and its grim drumming of invisible fingers on their devastated brains; if I were certain that women would smile obscenely and lie down with skirts lifted on the edge of footpaths, awaiting any male, and that males would suddenly throw themselves upon them lacerating vulva and throat with their teeth; if intoxicated, hungry mobs were to chase down the few elusive men with knives and there was death between being and being perpetuating their deep hatred; if the peace of an hour, tranquility of the spirit, love, loyalty, friendship would have to disappear from the face of the earth, and turbulence, restlessness, hatred, deception, hostility, madness, darkness and death would have to reign in their place forever; if a most beautiful book that I wrote, still unpublished and locked in my drawer, would have to do all this, I would publish that book and have no peace until it was published.”*

So Persio Falchi wrote in *Forca* a couple of years ago to express his concept of the Freedom of Art, and so I repeat now in *Iconoclasta!* to express my conception of Freedom of Thought.

It is an absolute and urgent need of mine to launch into the darkness the stormy and sinister light of my thoughts and the incredulous and mocking sneer of my rare ideas that want to freely wander, proud and magnificent, displaying their vigorous and uninhibited nakedness, going through the world in search of virile embraces. No one could be more revolutionary than I am, but this is precisely why I want to throw the corroding mercury of my thoughts into the midst of the senile impotence of the eunuchs of Human Thought. One cannot be half a revolutionary

and one cannot half-think. It is necessary to be like Ibsen, revolutionary in the most complete and radical sense of the word. And I feel that I am such!

## 7

History, materialism, monism, positivism and all the other isms of this world are old and rusty swords which are of no use to me and don't concern me. My principle is life and my end is death. I want to live my life intensely so that I can embrace my death tragically.

You are waiting for the revolution! Very well! My own began along time ago! When you are ready — God, what an endless wait! — it won't nauseate me to go along the road awhile with you!

But when you stop, I will continue on my mad and triumphant march toward the great and sublime conquest of Nothing!

Every society you build will have its fringes, and on the fringes of every society, heroic and restless vagabonds will wander, with their wild and virgin thoughts, only able to live by preparing ever new and terrible outbreaks of rebellion!

I shall be among them!

And after me, as before me, there will always be those who tell human beings:

*"So turn to yourselves rather than to your gods or idols: discover what is hidden within you, bring it to the light; reveal yourself!"*

Because everyone that searches his inner being and draws out what is mysteriously hidden there, is a shadow eclipsing every form of Society that exists beneath the rays of the Sun!

All societies tremble when the scornful aristocracy of Vagabonds, Unique ones, Unapproachable ones, rulers over the ideal, and Conquerors of Nothing advance without inhibitions. So, come on, Iconoclasts, forward!

*"Already the foreboding sky grows dark and silent!"*

Arcola, January 1920



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Renzo Novatore  
My Iconoclastic Individualism  
1920

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# Of Individualism and Rebellion

Renzo Novatore

1922

There are those who maintain that the human being is by nature a social being. Others maintain that the human being is by nature anti-social.

Well, I admit that I have never been able to clearly understand what they meant by their “by nature,” but I have understood that both sides are wrong, since the human being is social and anti-social at the same time.

Need, want, affection, love and sympathy are the elements that push him toward sociability and union.

The craving for independence and the desire for freedom push her toward solitude and individualism. But, while individualism operates and is realized against society, society defends itself from its attacks. The war between “societarianism” and “individualism” is thus a fertile war of vitality and energy. But, while the individual is necessary to society, this in its turn is necessary to him.

Individualism couldn’t possibly exist if there was no society against which it could affirm itself and live, expand itself and rejoice.

\* \* \*

Among human beings — only the rebel is the most beautiful figure and the most complete being. He knows how to be the potential tool of his desiring will. He knows how to obey himself and command himself, to preserve himself and destroy himself. Because the rebel is the one who has learned the secret of living and the art of dying.

\* \* \*

The one who falls rebelling against each and all, prevails even while falling.

And prevailing means instilling the flame of her thought and imposing the light of her ideas in others.

But the fallen rebel’s truest follower is the one who, when falling, knows how to rebel even against the “rebellion” of the already fallen hero.

\* \* \*

Anyone who wants the spirit of rebellion to become eternal must want the child's rebellion not to change in its turn into the father's tyranny.

\* \* \*

If my father rebelled against my grandfather so as not to be a slave of the paternal faith, I rebel against my father so as not to be a slave of the faith that made him rebel in his turn.  
How could it make my son be tomorrow what I am today?

\* \* \*

Only from the ruins of everything the rebel has destroyed can the creative genius be born.  
But what does the creation of the genius prepare if not a new rebellion?

\* \* \*

I agree with Nietzsche in believing that there has never been any need to question a martyr to know the truth. But desiring force, daring audacity and skillful creative will are treasures inherited only from the genius, the rebel, the hero.

\* \* \*

I have seen a genius "steal" and an idiot throw a deadly bomb at a state minister.  
The first stole so as to live independently and create in freedom. The second killed because of a hidden personal hatred and the will to die.  
The first carried out a "vulgar, common crime" and is a "common criminal." The second carried out a "political crime" and is a "noble and generous political criminal." I now ask all subversive, political people in general, and anarchists in particular — if in facing this fact, it is a chance to raise another "political crime" up into the splendor of glory and the feasts of the sun so as to cast "common crime" into the mud.

\* \* \*

Alas! There are still too many who look at the work. But before looking at the work, I look at the creator. Yet even for many — so many — anarchists, it seems that the individual counts for little...

The majority of them are still among the rabble who say: "Human beings don't count. Events and ideas count." And this is why, even among us, many higher, sublime beings have been cast into the mud, while many idiots have been raised up in the sun.

\* \* \*

I deny the right to judge me to all those who don't understand the voice of my yearnings, the howl of my needs, the flights of my spirit, the sorrow of my mind, the thrill of my ideas and the anguish of my thought. But only I understand all this. Do you want to judge me? Okay then! But you will never judge my real self. Instead you will judge the "me" that you yourself have invented. When you believe you have me between your fingers to crush me, I will be up there, laughing in the distance.

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Renzo Novatore  
Of Individualism and Rebellion  
1922

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# Spiritual Perversity

Renzo Novatore

July 6, 1920

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## I

A spasm... A palpitation...

The Dawn rises from the brown bed of shadow and unties her blond braids in the laughing green morning.

Beautiful Dawn!

May she rain golden light on the white buds of the mysterious morning...

A morning of Life and Death, of love and perversity...

Yesterday evening when dusk fell and the vagabond spirits left the earth of Death to enter through paths of Silence and meditate on the luminous mysterious of the night, I created from Nothing the perverse object of my purest Love.

Now I have killed the Woman I created.

And I killed her because I loved her too much...

Her corpse lies at my feet, hideously twisted, with an everlasting red wound in her snow-white breast, opened like an eternal flower of blood.

On her purple-blue lips, a violent contraction is stamped like sarcasm and the pang that lashes out and curses...

She is naked and pale.

Before long, the sun will dress her again in the moist purplish cloak of gold.

I will bend over this hidden meadow, I will make a green chalice with the poisonous leaves of bitter herbs, and I will make holy Communion with the purity of silver dewdrops.

When the sun has scattered the last traces of my baleful crime, I will play the litanies of Flowers and Death on the violin of sorrow.

## II

The Night has returned.

That terrible black Night, populated by Ghosts...

Are they the phantoms of fear? Are they the shadows of remorse? Are they macabre dances of unknown truths?

O Light, why don't you set me ablaze? O Shadow, why don't you envelope me?

## III

I am — like a reptile — crouching in the thorny hedge that surrounds the edge of the meadow. A toad and a serpent are my only companions.

A little ways away from me, a strange, solitary night bird sings a desperate song about the reasons for Laughter and Weeping.

But in these extreme expressions it sighs: FUTILITY!

But I can't see this very strange bird. The night is too deep... But I hear it!

Ah! what tragic voices one hears, never silent...

But what does all this matter?

In the sky's blue vault, myriads of stars dance merrily...

And so? And so what does it matter if here, a short distance from me, Crime dances with Remorse, and Love is embraced by Death? Aren't the herbs of this meadow poisonous and bitter? Isn't this the Valley where the ancient immortal Gods were born to live, enjoy and love in *perversity* and *sin*?

Then they joined the fated fishermen and raised their mortal rods.  
This is why they are cursed...

## IV

I hear the somber roar of two distinct sounds.  
The weeping of Life and the laughter of Death. How eloquent they are!...  
But why does Life weep? Why does Death laugh?

## V

I tried to open my eyes wide in the sun, and it blinded me.  
Now I am blind. Blind and cursed...  
I have nothing but darkness and silence within.  
I no longer have friends or lovers. I am alone.  
The kingdom of Shadow and Death is my kingdom.  
I howl desperately, but in vain. My unrecognized cry is dispersed in the endless desert. It roars, it thunders, but the only response is a mournful echo.  
An anguished and heart-rending echo.

## VI

Now I am the terrible Sinner riding the furious Centaur of Evil. I am the bridegroom of Eternity who laid himself down on a vast wave of darkness; I wager beakers of blood against the kisses of the dangerous children of Mystery.

My hands are impure because all that they have touched is impure, but in the luminous realm of my mind, flowers of the greatest purity and of an impeccable beauty have taken root.

...

A deep-sea diver, I have gone down into the deepest and most fearful chasms of the sea to rob it of its most secret treasures.

An eagle, I have soared to the highest flights of infinite space to rob it of the strangest, most ethereal mysteries.

A reptile, I have crawled on the moist earth to suck from the breasts of its infinite sweetness, the most bitter poisons.

Now I am the reckless maniacal swimmer lost in the murky waves of Life. I am the way-farer, blaspheming and laughing, who wanders in a desert world where only the satanic howl of FUTILITY thunders.

And this is why I can heroically call myself — along with being a poet — “a truly, deeply unhappy individual.”

I know I am a luminous point that goes uselessly through the gloomy futility of all things.



And it is this, my conscious desperation, this my awareness of the futility of *being*, that makes me deeply love Life. But don't you see, my friends, that my futile joy merges into your futile sorrow, so that later both will merge into the futility of Death?

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Spiritual Perversity  
July 6, 1920

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# The Revolt of the Unique

Renzo Novatore

1921

To comrade Carlo Molaschi with strength of mind and serenity of thought

I

I don't want to dictate moral maxims to my "neighbor," or teach anyone anything... I leave this task to the missionaries of all faiths, the priests of all churches, the demagogues of all parties, the apostles of all ideas.

I only want to howl my extreme rebellion against everything that oppresses me; I only want to push far away from me everything that the religious, socialist, or libertarian priesthood wants to impose on my individuality without me having freely accepted and wanted it.

Digging into the underground of my depths, I have been able to penetrate the mystery of my "I" (emotional—spiritual—physical—instinctive); I have been able to discover my will and my power; I have been able to take possession of my "uniqueness."

The dogmatic frogs of societarianism and the geese of the ideal croaked, but their croaking only served to fill my heart with intoxication and distill poisons in my words.

The theoretical and philosophical chattering of the ruling plebeian "wisdom" no longer moves me, just like the choreographic demonstrations of starving mobs or those of the people cheering new redeeming Jesuses no longer move me...

I have a personal truth of my own that isn't and can't be universal "truth." I am guided by an instinct, by a feeling, by a dream, that are only the trilogy composing the unique ideal that is my individuality. Individuality that nobody except me and my power can make strong, free, and happy!...

I don't deny to anyone the beauty of their ideas, the strength of their dream, and the truth of their thought.

I know that everyone may lock within himself precious mines filled with unknown treasures; I know that where a human being lives there is—or can be—a world with all its lands and seas, its joys and sorrows, its sun and stars, its loves and hates.

Let each human being therefore work—if he thinks this way—at the discovery of his own I, at the realization of his own dream, at the complete integration and full development of his own individuality. Every human being who has discovered and won himself walks on his own path and follows his free course.

But let no one come to me to impose his belief, his will, his faith on me. By denying god, fatherland, authority, and law, I have achieved anarchism. By refusing to sacrifice myself on the altar of the people and of humanity, I have achieved individualism.

Now I am free...

The war that I opened against phantoms has ended with my victory. Now the cycle of a new war has opened!

The war against the brute force of society, of the people, of humanity. Against these terrible and colossal monsters that aren't ashamed to dare to act against the unique and the brutal force of their thousand monstrous arms, I "authorize" myself to defend myself with all the weapons that it is possible for me to dare to use: with all those means that I have the power and the ability to make use of. Without scruples!

Because I am one who really follows himself!

I cultivate the flowers of my garden and I quench my thirst at my own springs.

If for you my flowers are poisonous and my waters bitter, to me instead they fill the heart with a fierce joy and give me wild and heroic quivers in the flesh and spirit.

When I think of the claims of missionaries and teachers; of moralists and educators, I get the desire to laugh.

*You are utterly absurd, oh lost soul. You are a poor lunatic who lives in the moral (?). You are an exaggeration; you walk a false and wrong path. Your 'morale' is fierce, your principle is 'cruel'!* So, more or less, the knowing "sages" of universal happiness want to talk to me, the stammering fools of "good" and "evil," those who have discovered "truth" and buried "lies"...

*Now god is dead, they say, the fatherland is destroyed, authority has collapsed. Forward, everywhere, young people, for the proletarian international, for the joy of knowing universal happiness. And anyone who won't die for this 'sacred cause' is a fierce 'egoist,' a 'wicked' person, a 'traitor'!* It seems they want to say, or rather they do say, *The human being doesn't count; the idea counts; Humanity counts!*

And I, poor microscopic insect, poor powerless cell diseased with Stirner's "fierce egoism"—not to mention infected by arrogant Zarathustrian overhumania—am something less than nothing, an invisible particle that is of no use at all except as raw material put at the disposal of the great architects of the universe; except as a sacrificial beast to give in fiery slaughter to the goddess "humanity," to the god "people" or to the Sun of the future...

## II

Comrade Carlo Molaschi will think: but of what use is this whole sermon of Renzo Novatore's, made as a prelude to a polemical writing dedicated to me?

Don't I also know these things?

Aren't they also old things of the Earth and the Sun?

But he will add: *The individualist current of anarchism threatened—and perhaps still threatens—to degenerate into absurdity (?). Stirner with his gospel of fierce egoism, has tried to slaughter human feeling in the individual; and the presumptuous egoism of the overhuman has led many comrades to the adoration of his own I.*

And he will continue: *But anarchist individualism should not* (pay attention to the "should not": I am the one who has emphasized it) *be either the ferocity of the Unique, nor the arrogance of Zarathustra.*

*Mutual aid, solidarity, and love are necessities of life!*

Let's leave aside for a moment the "fierce egoism of Stirner's Unique" that is so cruelly fierce as to affirm that he is only "hostile" to all that is "dark." Let's leave aside for now that cynical "slaughterer of human feeling" (I say liberator of human feeling) who said: "My egoism is not opposed to love, is not the enemy of sacrifice and self-denial... and not even of socialism, in short, not the enemy of actual interests, and rebels not against love, but against sacred love, not against thought, but against sacred thought, not against socialism but against sacred socialism."<sup>1</sup> But—as I said—let's leave aside for a moment this terrible "slaughterer of human feeling" and with him let's also leave aside that "arrogant and presumptuous Zarathustra" or, to be more precise, Friedrich Nietzsche; that cruel Friedrich Nietzsche, who is without a doubt the highest bard of humanity, and the strongest and deepest—and let's get to ourselves.

Thus, that "should not" that I noted earlier starts to mean that individualism SHOULD be what he—Carlo Molaschi—preaches!

And when he says: "Mutual aid, brotherhood, love are needs of life!" (he once said—see the magazine *Libertà*, #7, November 1, 1913: "I despise solidarity, I feel that I am a stranger to humanity"), I respond that while admitting that they are a necessity, they are not and cannot be "a reality"! I say it of universal and particular reality.

Reality is hatred, enmity, war! Carlo Molaschi will answer: it is necessary to smash this reality; once he said (see the writing of his cited above): *I have no need to believe or hope in any Paradise, or to delude myself that my existence has to cooperate in making way for human progress*; but that Judas comes to create the other "reality" that is necessary here! And we still accept this as well... but for hundreds of centuries, prophets have announced this new "reality," martyrs have fallen, rebels have died, heroes have gone up on the guillotine, but with each day that passes, the hatred floods more strongly over the world, the mania for authority increases frightfully in every human heart, wars multiply and the "masses," the "crowds," the "proletarians"—despite illusory appearances—become more and more weary, more and more cowardly, more and more craven.

Molaschi will say (see "We and the Mass" in issue 9 of *Nichilismo*, August 24, 1920): "We ourselves are children of the people (what a marvelous father!), we feel the very suffering of the mass"; he once said (see *Libertà* cited above): "I live among human beings who seem similar to me; but I am not like them. They are refined or dissatisfied; I am restive, attentive to the reins of the law"; and he suffers under the yoke of a habit.

But I respond: the dream of workers is not my dream. The longings of the people are not my longings, the pains of the mass are not my pains!...

I feel the sorrow of my depth and the bitterness of what is impossible to me!

A crust of black bread is enough to satisfy the mass, but my longings cannot be satisfied!

It's true that Carlo Molaschi gleefully tubs his hands and says: *The Italian Syndicalist Union is strongly influenced by our ideas, many of its spokespeople are our comrades, we have a daily paper of national importance read by more than thirty five thousand people...* He once said (see *Il Ribelle* issue 6, January 2, 1915): *Anarchists have been and are much too concerned with proselytizing. Conferences and papers on propaganda...just to convince idiots who never knew how and never will know how to 'feel' any ideal to call themselves anarchists.*

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<sup>1</sup> This is a paraphrase of this passage from Stirner's Critics: "Egoism, as Stirner uses it, is not opposed to love nor to thought; it is no enemy of the sweet life of love, nor of devotion and sacrifice; it is no enemy of intimate warmth, but it is also no enemy of critique, nor of socialism, nor, in short, of any actual interest. It doesn't exclude any interest. It is directed against only disinterestedness and the uninteresting; not against love, but against sacred love, not against thought, but against sacred thought, not against socialists, but against sacred socialists, etc."

—But I still laugh skeptically at these new Molaschian enthusiasms as he once laughed skeptically when he stated that “anarchists are born and not made” and that he didn’t give a damn for the “future” since he was “free” having made himself the “purpose of his life.”

Carlo Molaschi says (see the comment he made to Vivani’s writing “I Will Be Pure,” published in issue 5 of *Pagine Libertarie*): “... the human being is free in so far as he lives in harmony with nature and with his likes.” He once said (quoting that “arrogant and presumptuous” “man of genius” who then had “ideas like his”): “The weak and infirm die. First principle of our love for the human being. We need rather to help them disappear.”

But I cannot live in “universal” harmony with my “likes” for the simple reason that they are not... and cannot be—for the reason that I have already outlined in the prelude of this piece of mine—my “likes.”

My likes are few in the relative sense and none at all in the absolute sense. So with the few that are like me in the “relative” sense, I remain in agreement against the multitude; in the absolute sense I remain alone—Unique—against them and the others. They become in their turn the “weak,” and the “infirm,” for me!

But now I seem to have wandered far enough.

So let’s stop!

Carlo Molaschi will smile ironically and say: *That fine devil Renzo Novatore has put out my old articles for scrutiny to show my contradictions, but by doing this he manages to do nothing other than to “show” how much ignorance he still holds in his mind. He ignores the laws... of evolution!*

Well, no, comrade Molaschi, it is not through pure and simple ignorance that I have done all this. No!

I did it for quite another reason...

I know what I wanted to note in you, you could—at least in the reverse direction—note it in myself and in all those who are not crystallized fossils.

But I did it just to show you that it is, at least, ridiculous to state that individualism “should” be that of Tucker and not that of Stirner. “Should” be this and “should” not be that!...

As far as the negating concept of anarchism we walk together; when anarchism becomes individualist, every individuality follows his or her own path. Yes, human beings evolve!

*At eighteen years of age, when experience is zero and the mind is excited by reading books very poorly understood, one can—at times—take on the menacing appearance of the overhuman; but later, when experience starts to analyze life then one evolves...*

And in evolving one now denies everything that one affirmed yesterday!

And that’s fine.

But no one has the “obligation” or the “duty” to follow the single path of our evolution... or devolution!...

Because someone who followed the evolution of Giovanni Papini would have ended up in church with him; one who followed Libero Tancredi ends up in interventionism and fascism; one who follows Renzo Novatore could end up one day with him in a lunatic asylum—perhaps a “libertarian communist” one. And one who would follow Carlo Molaschi might end up—how do I say it?—as Carlo Molaschi will end up!

And this is why, oh my friend, I am against that “should” which you, in my opinion, still pronounce with too much ease...

You see? If I am supposed to say something to these “likes”—who are not my likes—especially to the young ones—I will say this to them: Beware oh young spirits! Beware of the old sirens!

The old have ideas that cannot be those of youth. So seek again your cast-off selves. Discover yourselves. Don't let yourselves be violated! Old Tolstoy is a majestic, unshakable, gigantic figure. But I would pity any youth who professed the ideas of this old man!

Before coming to christianity, Papini passed through all rebellions. Then tired, exhausted, finished, he threw himself down on the bed of weakness, of impotence, of senility. He cast himself upon the bosom of "our mother church"!

Discover yourselves, oh young ones! Dig into yourselves. In each of you there must be precious mines of unknown treasures. But if in digging into your I you find nothing, don't look for anything in anyone. The most real and precious jewels would transmute into false stones in your hands. Because "anarchists are born and not made," as comrade Molaschi once said...

### III

"The anti-society perspective that tried several years ago to make inroads in the movement of anarchist ideas," Molaschi says, "has faded."

But all this that comrade Carlo Molaschi affirms is not entirely true...

It's true that with the daily paper *Umanità Nova*, the conferences, the unions, the workerism, the organizations, anarchism has ended up making itself official and becoming a party.

It's true that comrade Carlo Molaschi feels a great "joy" in finding himself in agreement with comrade Damiani; that he is "satisfied" to be in agreement with Luigi Fabbri and that he "shares" Malatesta's ideas.

It's true that Carlo Molaschi wants to make a mark, "orienting" individualism in his way!

But it's still not true that the "anti-society" current of individualism has completely faded into the heaven of anarchy.

There is still some "wild" reprobate, in the midst of so much paternal democratic domesticity, who holds the "barbaric" banner of anti-society individualism!

Yes: there is still someone...

### IV

First of all, we need to come to a bit of an agreement about what "anti-society" means.

I am not a misanthrope and so much the less a misogynist...

I need friends and lovers, clothes and bread. I am not an anchorite or a saint in the desert.

But there's no need to be such a thing in order to be anti-society. Being anti-society means—for me—not collaborating in the preservation of the present society nor lending one's efforts to any new social construction.

I said it once before:

*Every society you build will have its fringes, and on the fringes of every society, heroic and restless vagabonds will wander, with their wild and virgin thoughts, only able to live by preparing ever new and terrible outbreaks of rebellion!*

*I shall be among them!*

And if materialistic "needs" force me to go toward society, the "necessity" to be free sets me against it and gives birth in me to a third "need." That of doing violence to it. Without scruples!

This is my "anti-society" perspective. And if we happened to speak of so-called "progress" I could even affirm—without fear of going wrong—that the triumph and the glory of the human path are due only to the spirit that informs this anti-society principle of individualism.

### V

Carlo Molaschi who has launched himself with fury against the overhuman to throw it into the sea and against Stirner's "association of egoists" to make it suffer the same end; now he

proclaims with the impulse of faith B. R. Tucker's "association of the free," because—he says—"Tucker in his project of the association of the free allows that minorities, when they don't agree with majorities, can split (oh, strange miracle!...) from the association and create another one of their own."

But I bet that Carlo Molaschi knows much better than me what "might" be—or rather—what "is" hidden in that: "when they don't agree"!

Yes: Molaschi knows!...

VI

The word "Freedom" taken in itself is a negation: nothing—death!

Freedom is a propulsion towards power—it is the strength of conquest and the capacity for possession.

(I have had the capacity to free myself from that tiresome old lover of mine; because I had the capacity and the power, I have taken the liberty of gathering this new flower).

Living means doing good and bad to others. No one can live without hurting anyone...

Living means: dominating and being dominated!

With the realization of the unpleasant authoritarian communism of the socialists, the rulers would be a slimy handful of demagogues, vulgar, cunning insects; plebeian slaves in their turn of a dogma.

In realizing libertarian communism, the great majority would be the ruling Goddess. But libertarian communism (which is the dream of those who hate conflict and battle—which is youth and life—and for which they are nonetheless a quick, strange paradoxical contradiction, to make war in the name of equality and peace) would have to take extreme measures against those who want to come out, advance, rise up to a more ample affirmation of individual life.

Libertarian communism would then be forced to repress in order to preserve itself. But its materialistic preservation would be the categorical negation of the very spirit that informs and exalts it!

And here we are finally at anarchy—I admit that one can speak of this as a social realization of human life together. "Anarchy" would thus be nothing more nor less than the triumph of the higher "type."

Radically vanished—because even the lowliest of all human beings would have had to go beyond it—the as-stupid-as-it-is-vulgar right to private property and everything that is "material good." The spiritual dominator remains—the one who is noble by nature. He will stand above the others and dominate them.

(No one, I believe, would have the false pretension of levelling ethical, aesthetic, artistic, intellectual, and spiritual values, like physical and sexual values). Because the noble one, even in Anarchy—or rather, in anarchy more than in any other form of human life together—will enjoy pleasure that others would not be able to enjoy, even if he, for love of them, wanted to renounce them. Anarchy is therefore the natural Autocracy of the noble.

A simple test that thousands of other complicated ones are equal to him there. Yesterday a young woman offered herself—marvelous gift—to the charming and noble dominator Pietro Gori.

Today in the whirlpools of misery if a stunted "papa's" boy who nature has condemned bought her! He has enjoyed with money the fruit that in Anarchy he would never have been able to enjoy. And I'm no longer able to argue that in anarchy a cobbler is the same as a genius or that a hunchback is equal to an Adonis.

We can give both the same bread, but not the same pleasures.



And if it is true that friendship and love give joy and pleasure, I would just like to ask any anarchist if he can give his old semi-idiotic doorman what, in fact, he gives to Errico Malatesta in love and friendship.

I would just like to ask a few of our free and intelligent woman comrades if she can give to any nasty, conceited, vain, ambitious “comrade” what she willingly concedes to a kind, cultivated, loving, good comrade...

I repeat: Anarchy—for me—means: Autocracy of beauty, of genius, of art, and of all those who possess the willful and selective qualities suitable for dominating and that mother nature—justly or unjustly—grants and lavishes so generously on a few, while she denies them to most, as if the latter were her bastard children!

And if the overhuman that you—oh comrade Molaschi—have thrown with implacable fury into the stormy waves of the sea, were that elect—superior—type to which I just now alluded, it’s enough that he rise up again out of the waters more beautiful and stronger than before, since this race is an immortal race.

Everyone can be levelled before society (we are all equal before god!...) but the selective-individual values remain. They remain and dominate!

And for these and a thousand other reasons, in my relations with the present society, I declare myself “united” with Stirner’s Unique, and in my posthumous relations with the future society of distant becoming, I feel drawn toward the Antichrist and Zarathustra transformed and purified in the sun of my thought.

Of course, I am neither Max Stirner, nor Friedrich Nietzsche. Rather, halfway, between me and them there might be a fearful depth powerfully dug out by the mystic

Tolstoy, or the high and dreadful peaks illuminated by the voluptuously tormented spirit of Ibsen, as there could also be the conflagration of the pure and perverse Wildean mind!

## VII

Dear Molaschi, I am at the end. The polemic with you is done.

As you have seen, more than a polemic, it is a confession and a declaration.

I believe you’ve understood me.

I know that often the form takes hold of my hand and wraps and twists itself around the nakedness of my thought, like a beautiful and perverse female wraps herself around the virile body of the lover, almost managing to hide it from the modest eyes of most.

But this time I believe that it hasn’t been like this.

I have many times, but many times I have decidedly failed...

Then the writing is dedicated to you!

And you are not one of the many!

Your eyes are certainly able to see even a bit in the night...

Even though you don’t share my ideas, I am certain that you understand me.

And that is what I want! Only that...

There was a time when I understood you as flesh of my flesh, feeling my feeling. Now no longer!

And that is why my love toward you fades away among the shadows of a memory, but leaves the torches of the strongest, most sincere admiration lit.

We may have started from the same stream, but we started on the path to two different mountains. If we both reach the peaks we will stretch out our hands over the gulf since we will have conquered fate and overcome the abyss.

And then we will love each other with a different love!

*Pagina Libertaria*

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September 15

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The Revolt of the Unique  
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# Toward the Creative Nothing

Renzo Novatore

1924

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## Translator's Note

In order to preserve the poetic integrity of this text, I did not conform it to contemporary standards of “political correctness”. I have also translated the introduction to the 1993 Italian edition of *Verso il Nulla Creatore*, which was the basis of my translation. A brief biographical note and a reminiscence from Novatore’s comrade, Enzo Martucci are included to give a feel for the man and his life.

## Translator's Introduction

It is difficult to find anarchist works in English that are at the same time “individualist” and explicitly revolutionary, that emphasize the centrality of the aim of individual self-determination to a revolution that will “communalize material wealth” as it will “individualize spiritual wealth”. For this and other reasons I chose to translate *Toward the Creative Nothing* by Renzo Novatore and publish several of his shorter pieces. Written shortly after World War I, as a revolution was occurring in Russia and uprisings were happening in Germany and Italy, this poetic text responds to the upheaval of its time with a call for a revolution that could truly move the human race beyond the spiritual impoverishment, the equality in baseness that democracy and socialism offered. Bourgeois society seemed to have reached its dusk, and Novatore saw the hope for a new dawn only in such a revolution — one that went beyond the mere economic demands of the socialists and communists — a revolution moved by great ideas and great passions that would break with the low values of bourgeois democratic civilization.

Novatore recognized that the war had simply reinforced the lowest and most cowardly of bourgeois values. The “proletarian frogs” just let themselves be led to the slaughter — killing each other for the cause of those who exploited them — because, in spite of their exploitation, they continued to share the values of their masters, the “bourgeois toads” — the values of the belly, the democratic values of equality in baseness, the rule of survival over life.

In our time when the “great dusk” of bourgeois democratic society that is heralded in this text seems to have become an eternal dusk making the entire world a dull grey nightmare of survival, Novatore’s call to a destructive revolution based on great passions and ideas, on the dreams and desires of a mighty and strong-willed “I” seems more necessary than ever if we are to move beyond this pathetic swamp of mediocrity. Of course, no revolution can go very far without the insurrection of the exploited against their condition. But this is precisely the point: when the proletarians rise *up against their proletarianization*, this means taking their revolt beyond the demand for full bellies to the active appropriation of *full lives*.

Novatore recognized that one could not struggle against this order alone — that revolution was necessary, not just individual revolt. If he mocked the proletarians of his time, it is because they did not lift themselves above the bourgeois hordes with great dreams and great will. So, as Novatore could have predicted, the “great proletarian revolution” in Russia came to embrace the worst of bourgeois values and created a monstrous machine of exploitation. Starting from the bourgeois values of the belly that place productivity above all else, that anti-individual egalitarianism of survival above all, how could it do otherwise?

Now more than ever we need an anti-democratic, anti-capitalist, anti-state revolutionary movement which aims at the total liberation of every individual from all that prevents her from living

his life in terms of her most beautiful dreams — dreams freed from the limits of the market. Such a movement must, of course, find ways to intervene in the real struggles of all the exploited, to move class conflict toward a real rupture with the social order and its survivalist values. These are matters we must wrestle now analyzing our present situation to find the openings for our insurrectional project. Novatore's text is a light of poetry and passion — one light among many — which may help us to pierce through the gloom of the capitalist technological dusk that surrounds us — a ray of singularity breaking through the dinginess of the present mediocrity with its call for the revolution of the mightiest dreams.

## Biographical Note

Renzo Novatore is the pen-name of Abele Rizieri Ferrari who was born in Arcola, Italy (a village of La Spezia) on May 12, 1890 to a poor peasant family. Unwilling to adapt to scholastic discipline, he only attended a few months of the first grade of grammar school and then left school forever. Though his father forced him to work on the farm, his strong will and thirst for knowledge led him to become a self-taught poet and philosopher. Exploring these matters outside the limits imposed by the educational system, as a youth he read Stirner, Nietzsche, Wilde, Ibsen, Baudelaire, Schopenhauer and many others with a critical mind.

From 1908 on, he considered himself an anarchist. In 1910, he was charged with the burning of a local church and spent three months in prison. A year later, he went on the lam for several months because the police wanted him for theft and robbery. On September 30, 1911, the police arrested him for vandalism. In 1914, he began to write for anarchist papers. He was drafted during the first World War. He deserted his regiment on April 26, 1918 and was sentenced to death by a military tribunal for desertion and high treason on October 31. He left his village and went on the lam, propagating the armed uprising against the state.

On June 30, 1919, a farmer sold him to the police after an uprising in La Spezia. He was sentenced to ten years in prison, but was released in a general amnesty a few months later. He rejoined the anarchist movement and took part in various insurrectionary endeavors. In 1920, the police arrested him again for an armed assault on an arms depository at the naval barracks in Val di Fornola. Several months later, he was free, and participated in another insurrectionary endeavor that failed because of a snitch.

In the summer of 1922, three trucks full of fascists stopped in front of his home, where he lived with his wife and two sons. The fascists surrounded the house, but Novatore used grenades against them and was able to escape. He went underground one more time.

On November 29, 1922, Novatore and his comrade, Sante Pollastro, went into a tavern in Teglia. Three *carabinieri* (Italian military police) followed them inside. When the two anarchists tried to leave, the *carabinieri* began shooting. The warrant officer killed Novatore, but was then killed by Pollastro. One *carabiniere* ran away, and the last begged Pollastro for mercy. The anarchist escaped without shooting him.

Renzo Novatore wrote for many anarchist papers (*Cronaca Libertaria*, *Il Libertario*, *Iconoclasta!*, *Gli Scamicciati*, *Nichilismo*, *Pagine Libere*) where he debated with other anarchists (among them Camillo Berneri). He published a magazine, *Vertice*, that has unfortunately been lost. In 1924, an individualist anarchist group published two pamphlets of his writings: *Al Disopra dell'Arco* and *Verso il Nulla Creatore*.

## Introduction from the 1993 Edition Published by Centrolibri-Edizioni Anarchiche e Libertarie

About 70 years since its first publication, *Toward the Creative Nothing* seems to really maintain its destructive force intact. This characteristic of unchanging timeliness, in spite of every upsetting social occurrence and beyond the literary form, is common to a great many of the writings of individualist anarchists, that is to say, of those who did not base their lives on a social and economic program that was to be realized — the validity of which could only be determined by History — but on the individual, on being a real human being in flesh and bone. (This very probably explains the recent revival of enthusiasm for the work of Stirner.)

But the enhanced value of the individual cannot and must not decay into the constitution of a new school, a new ideology which in a time of uncertainty like the one that we are going through could attract all those — and they are many — who go in search of a point of unshakeable support. One cannot substitute the Individual for the Party merely because it is considered exempt from every critique in relation to social reality. In conclusion the greatest risk is that of enclosing oneself in the classic ivory tower, as many individualist anarchists in the past had, in fact, done.

Many, but not all. Here then is the reprint of the work by Renzo Novatore that allows us to rediscover his figure under several aspects that are exceptional in the individualist anarchist, since it not only gets rid of possible speculations about individualism, but is, at the same time, a call to struggle with a timeliness that is at times amazing.

Among those who declare themselves to be individualist anarchists, Renzo Novatore undoubtedly occupies a place of remark, being one of the greatest examples of that which in past epochs was called “heroic and iconoclastic anarchism”. Man of thought and action, in the course of his life, Novatore had a way most of the time of showing his own uniqueness.

During the First World War, when interventionism picked up not a few followers among the anarchists, particularly within the ranks of the individualists, Novatore lined himself up resolutely against the war, deserting with arms in hand and being condemned to death for it by the tribunal in La Spezia. Unlike the great portion of other individualists who amused themselves with academic meditations on the “I”. Novatore live as an outlaw committing *attentats* and expropriations and actively participating in numerous insurrectional endeavors until he was killed in a gun battle with *carabinieri* in 1922.

Anti-dogmatic, he entered into polemics with both the muscle-bound anarchist organizers of the UAI (Union of Italian Anarchists) — he had a most violent argument with Camillo Berneri — and with the spokespeople of a certain type of anarchist individualism (like Carlo Molaschi) often and willingly. For Novatore — a reader of Stirner, but not for that a disciple of stirnerism — the affirmation of the individual, the continuous tension toward freedom, led inevitably to the struggle against the existent, to the violent battle against authority and against every type of “wait — and see” attitude.

Written around 1921, *Toward the Creative Nothing*, which visibly feels the effects of Nietzsche’s influence on the author, attacks christianity, socialism, democracy, fascism one after the other, showing the material and spiritual destitution in them. All that which has led to the decadence of the individual, that which subjected it under various pretexts to “social phantoms” is assailed with iconoclastic fury. With this critique of that which belittles the uniqueness of the individual — which is still valid now — Novatore demolishes all the widespread commonplaces on the worth



of individuals. At times with a smile on his lips and at other times with rage, Novatore refutes anyone who imagines him closed in the cloister of philosophical speculation; he drives back the accusations of those who believe him to be a blind negator, one deprived of projectuality; he shows the absurdity of those who believe him to be opposed to the revolution and favorable only to individual revolt. All of this without ever missing an opportunity to affirm the uniqueness of the individual, the greatness of the dream. The force of desire, the beauty of anarchy. In other words, here is what today has come to be considered out-of-date, but which perhaps is more simply out of fashion.

Certainly, a lot of time has passed since the writing of this text. But the triumph of democracy, the survival of stalinism, the rebirth of fascism, the deluge of technology, the universalization of commodities, the validation carried out by the mass media, the reduction of language, the contempt for utopia; this is what conspires to drown the individual in a sea of mediocrity, to tame its uniqueness, to placate every instinct of revolt within it, to render it incapable of love as well as hatred, impotent in its quiet life — all this is frighteningly current. Here this is because it renders that which can serve to desecrate and combat this situation equally current.

One thing is certain, only one who prefers the stormy sea to stagnant water will surely know how to appreciate the iconoclastic work of Renzo Novatore.

M.S.

## Renzo Novatore

*By Enzo Martucci (revised from a translation by Stephen Marietta)*

My soul is a sacrilegious temple  
in which the bells of sin and crime,  
voluptuous and perverse,  
loudly ring out revolt and despair.

These words written in 1920, give us a glimpse of the promethean being of Renzo Novatore.

Novatore was a poet of the free life. Intolerant of every chain and limitation, he wanted to follow every impulse that rose within him. He wanted to understand everything and experience all sensations — those which lead to the abyss and those which lead to the stars. And then at death to melt into nothingness, having lived intensely and heroically so as to reach his full power as a complete man.

The son of a poor farmer from Arcola, Italy, Abile Riziero Ferrari (Renzo Novatore) soon showed his great sensibility and rebelliousness. When his father wanted him to plow the fields he would flee, stealing fruit and chickens to sell so that he could buy books to read under a tree in the forest. In this way he educated himself and quickly developed a taste for non-conformist writers. In these he found reasons for his instinctive aversion to oppression and restriction, to the principles and institutions that reduce men to obedience and renunciation.

As a young man he joined the Arcola group of anarcho-communists, but he was not satisfied with the harmony and limited freedom of the new society they awaited so eagerly. “I am with you in destroying the tyranny of existing society,” he said, “but when you have done this and begun to build anew, then I will oppose and go beyond you.”

Until he was fifteen years old, Renzo included the church in his poetry. After that, freed and unprejudiced, he never planted any roots in the gregarious existence of his village, but often found himself in conflict with both men and the law. He scandalized his respectable family, who wondered what they had done to deserve such a devil...

... Novatore, who was influenced by Baudelaire and Nietzsche, asserted that we had needs and aspirations that could not be satisfied without injury to the needs and aspirations of others. Therefore we must either renounce them and become slaves, or satisfy them and come into conflict with Society, whatever kind it may be, even if it calls itself anarchist. Novatore:

Anarchy is not a social form, but a method of individuation. No society will concede to me more than a limited freedom and a well-being that it grants to each of its members. But I am not content with this and want more. I want all that I have the power to conquer. Every society seeks to confine me to the august limits of the permitted and the prohibited. But I do not acknowledge these limits, for nothing is forbidden and all is permitted to those who have the force and the valor.

Consequently, anarchy, which is the natural liberty of the individual freed from the odious yoke of spiritual and material rulers, is not the construction of a new and suffocating society.' It is a decisive fight against all societies — christian, democratic, socialist, communist, etc., etc. Anarchism is the eternal struggle of a small minority of aristocratic outsiders against all societies which follow one another on the stage of history.

Those were the ideas expressed by Novatore in *Il Libertario* of La Spezia, *L'Iconoclasta* of Pistoia, and other anarchist journals. And these were the ideas that then influenced me as I was well prepared to receive them.

During World War I Novatore refused to fight for a cause that was not his own and took to the mountains. Astute, courageous, vigilant, his pistol at the ready the authorities failed at every attempt to capture him. At the end of the war the deserters were amnestied and he was able to return to his village where his wife and son were waiting for him.

I was sixteen years old and had run away from home and my studies, freeing myself from my bourgeois family, who had done everything they could to stop my anarchist activities. Passing through Saranza on my way to Milan, I stopped to get to know Novatore, having read his article "My Iconoclastic Individualism". Renzo came at once to meet me together with another anarchist called Lucherini.

We passed unforgettable hours together. Our discussions were long and he helped me fill gaps in my thinking, setting me on my way to the solution of many fundamental problems. I was struck by his enthusiasm.

His appearance was impressive. Of medium height he was athletic in build, and had a large forehead. His eyes were vivacious and expressed sensibility, intelligence and force. He had an ironic smile that revealed the contempt of a superior spirit for men and the world. He was thirty-one years old, but already had the aura of genius.

After two months wandering around Italy with the police at my heels, I returned to Arcola to see Renzo again. But Emma, his wife, told me that he was also hunted and that I could only meet him at night in the forest.

Once again we had long discussions and I was able to appreciate his exceptional qualities as a poet, philosopher and man of action even more. I valued the power of his intellect and his fine sensitivity which was like that of a Greek god or a divine beast. We parted for the last time at dawn.

Both of us were existing under terrible conditions. We were in open struggle against Society, which would have liked to throw us in jail. Renzo had been attacked in his house at Fresonaro by a band of armed fascists who intended to kill him, but he had driven them off with home-made grenades. After that he had to keep a safe distance from the village.

Despite being an outlaw, he continued to develop his individualist anarchist ideas in libertarian papers. I did the same and we aroused the anger of the theoreticians of anarcho-communism. One of them, Professor Camillo Berneri, described us in the October, 1920 issue of *L'Iconoclasta* as "Paranoid megalomaniacs, exalters of a mad philosophy and decadent literature, feeble imitators of the artists of opium and hashish, sirens at so much an hour."

I could not reply because in the meantime I had been arrested and shut up in a House of Correction. But Renzo replied for both of us and took "this bookworm in whom it is difficult to find the spirit and fire of a true anarchist" to task.

More than a year later I was provisionally released from prison, but I could find out nothing regarding the whereabouts of Renzo. Finally I received the terrible news that he had been killed.

He was at an inn in Bolzaneto, near Genova, along with the intrepid illegalist S.P., when a group of *carabinieri* arrived disguised as hunters. Novatore and S. P. immediately opened fire and the police responded. The tragic result was two dead, Renzo and Marasciallo Lempano of the *carabinieri*, and one policeman wounded. This was in 1922: a few months before the fascist march on Rome.

So a great and original poet, who, putting his thoughts and feelings into action, attacked the mangy herd of sheep and shepherds, died at the age of thirty three. He showed that life can be lived in *intensity*, not in *duration* as the cowardly mass want and practice.

After his death it was discovered that, together with a few others, he was preparing to strike at society and tear from it that which it denies the individual. And in the Assizes Court where his accomplices were tried, a prosecuting counsel acknowledged his bravery and called him "a strange blend of light and darkness, love and anarchy, the sublime and the criminal."

A few friends collected some of his writings and posthumously published them in two volumes: *Above Authority (Al Disopra dell'Arco)* and *Toward the Creative Nothing (Verso il Nulla Creatore)*. Other writings remained with his family or were lost.

So an exceptional man lived and died — the man I felt was closest to me in his ideals and aspirations. He described himself as "an atheist of solitude" He wanted to "ravish the impossible" and embraced life like an ardent lover. He was a lofty conquistador of immortality and power, who wanted to bring all to the maximum splendor of beauty.

# Toward the Creative Nothing

## I

Our epoch is an epoch of decadence. Bourgeois-christian-plebeian civilization arrived at the dead end of its evolution a long time ago.

Democracy has arrived!

But under the false splendor of democratic civilization, higher spiritual values have fallen, shattered.

Willful strength, barbarous individuality, free art, heroism, genius, poetry have been scorned, mocked, slandered.

And not in the name of "I", but of the "collective". Not in the name of "the unique one", but of society.

Thus christianity — condemning the primitive and wild force of the virgin instinct — killed the vigorously pagan "concept" of the joy of the earth. Democracy — its offspring — glorified itself making the justification for this crime and reveling in its grim and vulgar enormity.

Already we knew it!

Christianity had brutally planted the poisoned blade in the healthy, quivering flesh of all humanity; it had goaded a cold wave of darkness with mystically brutal fury to dim the serene and festive exultation of the dionysian spirit of our pagan ancestors.

In one cold evening, winter fatally fell upon a warm midday of summer. It was *christianity* that, substituting the phantasm of "god" for the vibrant reality of "I", declared itself the fierce enemy of the joy of living and avenged itself knavishly on earthly life.

With christianity Life was sent to mourn in the frightful abysses of the most bitter renunciations; she was pushed toward the glacier of disavowal and death. And from this glacier of disavowal and death, democracy was born.

Thus democracy — the mother of socialism — is the daughter of christianity.

## II

With the triumph of democratic civilization the spiritual mob was glorified. With its fierce anti-individualism - democracy being incapable of understanding such a thing - trampled all the heroic beauty of the anti-collectivist and creative "I".

The bourgeois toads and the proletarian frogs clasped each others hands in a common spiritual baseness, piously receiving communion from the lead cup containing the slimy liquor of the very social lies that democracy handed to each of them.

And the songs that bourgeois and proletarian raised at their spiritual communion were a common and noisy "Hurrah!" to the victorious and triumphant Goose.

And while the “Hurrah!”’s burst forth high and frenzied, she — democracy — pressed the plebeian cap on her forehead, proclaiming — grim and savage irony — the equal rights... of Man!

It was then that the Eagle, in his prudent awareness, beat his titanic wings more swiftly, soaring — disgusted by the trivial performance — toward the peak of meditation.

Thus, the democratic Goose remained queen of the world and lady of all things, imperial mistress and sovereign.

But since something waiting above her laughed, she — by means of socialism, her only true son — moved to hurl a stone and a word, in the low swampy realm where the toads and frogs croaked, to raise a materialistic fistfight in order to make it pass through a titanic war to superb ideas and to spirituality. And in the marshes, the fistfight happened. It happened in such a plebeian manner as to spray mud so high that it stained the stars.

Thus, everything was contaminated with democracy.

Everything!

Even that which was best here.

Even that which was worst here.

In the reign of democracy, the struggles that were opened between capital and labor were stunted struggles, impotent ghosts of war, deprived of all content of high spirituality and of brave revolutionary greatness, unable to create a different concept of life, stronger and more beautiful.

Bourgeois and proletarian, though clashing over questions of class, of power and of the belly, still always remained united in common hatred against the great vagabonds of the spirit, against the solitaries of the idea. Against all those stricken by thought, against all those transfigured by a superior beauty.

With democratic civilization, Christ has triumphed.

In addition to paradise in heaven, “the poor in spirit” had democracy on earth.

If the triumph has not yet been completed, socialism will complete it. In its theoretical conception, it has already announced itself for a long time. It aims to “level” all human worth.

Listen, oh youthful spirits!

The war against the human individual was begun by Christ in the name of god, was developed by democracy in the name of society and threatens to complete itself in socialism in the name of humanity.

If we do not know in time how to destroy these three absurd as well as dangerous phantoms, the individual will be inexorably lost.

It is necessary that the revolt of the “I” expands itself, broadens itself, generalizes itself!

We — the forerunners of the time — have already lit the beacons!

We have lit the torches of thought.

We have brandished the ax of action.

And we have smashed.

And we have unhinged.

But our individual “crimes” must be the fatal announcement of a great social storm.

The great and dreadful storm that will smash all the structures of the conventional lies, that will unhinge the walls of all hypocrisy, that will reduce the old world to a heap of ruins and smoking rubble!

Because it is from these ruins of god, of society, of family and of humanity that the new human mind could be born flourishing and festive, that new human mind which — on the rubble of all the past — will sing the birth of the liberated man: the free and great “I”.

### III

Christ was a paradoxical misunderstanding from the gospels. He was a sad and sorrowful phenomenon of decadence, born of pagan fatigue.

The Antichrist is the healthy son of all the bold hatred that Life has bred in the secrecy of its own fecund breast, during the twenty and more centuries of christian order.

Because history returns.

Because eternal return is the law that rules the universe.

It is the destiny of the world!

It is the axis around which life itself turns!

To perpetuate itself.

To run itself back.

To contradict itself.

To pursue itself.

To not die.

Because life is a movement, an action.

That pursues thought.

That yearns for thought.

That loves thought.

And this being walks, runs, bustles around.

Life wants to stir in the kingdom of ideas.

But when the way is impractical, then, thought weeps.

It weeps and despairs...

Then weariness makes it weak, renders it christian.

Then it takes its sister life in hand and seeks to confine her in the realm of death.

But the Antichrist — the spirit of the most mysterious and profound instinct — calls Life back to himself, shouting barbarically to her: Let's begin again!

And Life begins again!

Because it does not want to die.

And if Christ symbolizes the weariness of life, the sunset of thought: the death of the idea!

The Antichrist symbolizes the instinct of life.

He symbolizes the resurrection of thought.

The Antichrist is the symbol of a new dawn.

### IV

If the dying democratic (bourgeois-christian-plebeian) civilization succeeded in leveling the human mind, denying every high spiritual value that stands out above it, it — fortunately — did not succeed in leveling the differences of class, of privilege, and of caste, which — as we have already said — remained divided only over of a question of the belly.

Since — for the one class as for the other — the belly remained — it is necessary to confess it and not only to confess it as the supreme ideal. And socialism understood all this.

It understood it, and since it was a skillful — and at last, perhaps, practically useful — speculator, it cast the poison of its coarse doctrine of equality (equality of lice before the sacred majesty of the sovereign state) into the wells of slavery where innocence blissfully quenched its thirst.

But the poison that socialism spread was not the powerful poison capable of giving heroic virtue to anyone who drank it. No: it was not the radical poison capable of performing the miracle that elevates the human mind — transfiguring it and freeing it. Rather it was a hybrid blend of “yes” and “no”. A livid mixture of “authority” and “faith”, of “state” and of “the future”.

So that, through socialism, the proletarian mob once again felt close to the bourgeois mob and together they turned toward the horizon, faithfully awaiting the Sun of the Future!

And this because, while socialism was not able to transform the shivering hands of the slaves into so many iconoclastic, pitiless and rapacious claws, it was also incapable of transforming the mean avarice of the tyrants into the high and superior virtue of generosity.

With socialism, the corrupt and viscous circle created by christianity and developed by democracy was not broken. Instead it consolidated itself better.

Socialism remained as a dangerous and impractical bridge between the tyrant and the slave; as a false link of conjunction; as the ambiguity of the “yes” and the “no” from which its absurd underlying principle is mixed.

And, once again, we saw the fatally obscene joke that disgusted us. We saw socialism, proletariat and bourgeoisie, together reenter the orbit of the lowest spiritual poverty to worship democracy. But democracy — being the people that governed the people by beatings with cudgels — for the love of the people as Oscar Wilde one day quipped — it was logical that true free spirits, great vagabonds of the idea, more strongly felt the need to push decisively toward the extreme boundary of their iconoclasm of the solitary in order to prepare the trained phalanxes of the human eagles in the silent desert, those who will furiously take part in the tragic celebration of the social dusk in order to overturn democratic civilization between their steel claws, and plunge it into the void of an ancient time that was.

## V

When the bourgeoisie had kneeled to the right of socialism in the sacred temple of democracy, they serenely stretched out in the bed of expectation to sleep their absurd sleep of peace. But the proletarians, who had lost their happy innocence by drinking the socialist poison, shouted from the left side, upsetting the tranquil sleep of the idiotic, criminal bourgeoisie.

In the meantime, on the higher mountains of thought, the vagabonds of the idea overcame nausea, announcing that something like the roaring laughter of Zarathustra had echoed sinisterly.

The wind of the spirit, similar to a hurricane, would have had to penetrate the human mind and raise it impetuously in the whirlwind of ideas in order to overwhelm all the old values from the darkness of time, raising the life of the sublimated instinct again in the sun with the new thought.

But, awakening, the bourgeois toads understood that some incomprehensible thing cried out in the heights, threatening their base existence. Yes: they understood that a thing arrive from the heights like a rock, a roar, a menace.

They understood that the satanic voices of frenzied forerunners of time announced a furious tempest that, arising from the renewed will of a few solitaries, exploded in the entrails of society to raze it to the ground.

But they have not understood (and will never understand this until they have been crushed) that what passed over the world was the powerful wing of a free life in the beating of which was the death of the “bourgeois man” and of the “proletarian man”, because all people could have been “unique” and “universal” at the same time.

And this was the reason why all the bourgeoisie of the world rang their bells, made from false idealistic metal, in mass, calling themselves to a great assembly.

The assembly was general...

All the bourgeoisie gathered.

They gathered among the slimy rushes growing from the quagmire of their common lies and there, in the silence of the mud, they decided the extermination of the proletarian frogs, their servants and their friends.

In the ferocious plot all sides were devotees of Christ and of democracy.

All the former apostles of the frogs attended as well. The war was decided and the prince of the black vipers blessed the fratricidal armies in the name of the god who said, “Do not kill”, while the symbolic vicar of death implored his goddess who came to dance on the earth.

Then socialism — as skillful acrobat and practical juggler — took a leap ahead. He jumped on the tight wire of sentimental political speculation, his brow encircled in black, and, aching and weeping more or less this way, said, “I am the true enemy of violence. I am the enemy of war, and also the enemy of revolution. I am the enemy of blood.”

And after having spoken again of “peace” and of “equality”, of “faith” and of “martyrdom”, of “humanity” and of “the future”, he intoned a song on the motifs of the “yes” and of the “no”, bowed his head and wept.

He wept the tears of Judas, which are not even the “I wash my hands of it” of Pilate.

And the frogs departed...

They departed toward the realm of supreme human baseness.

They departed toward the mud of all the trenches.

They departed... And death came! It came drunk on blood and danced horribly in the world. For five long years...

It was then that the great vagabonds of the spirit, taken with a new disgust, rode their free eagles once more to soar dizzily in the solitude of their distant glaciers to laugh and curse.

Even the spirit of Zarathustra — the truest lover of war and the most sincere friend of warriors — must have remained sufficiently disgusted and scornful since somebody heard him exclaim: “For me, you must be those who stretch your eyes in search of the enemy of your enemy. And in some of you hatred blazes at first glance. You must look for your enemy, fight your war. And this for your ideas!

And if your idea succumbs, your rectitude cries of triumph!”

But alas! The heroic sermon of the liberating barbarian availed nothing.

The human frogs knew neither how to distinguish their own enemy nor how to fight for their own ideas. (The frogs have no ideas!)

And neither recognizing their enemies nor having their own ideas, they fought for the bellies of their brothers in Christ, for their equals in democracy.

They fought against each other for their enemy.



Abel, revived, died for Cain a second time. But this time, at his own hand!  
 Voluntarily...  
 Voluntarily, because he could have rebelled, and he did not do so...  
 Because he could have said: no!  
 Or yes!  
 Because saying: "no" he could have been strong!  
 Because saying: "yes", he could have shown that he "believed" in the "cause for which he  
 fought.  
 But he said neither "yes" nor "no".  
 He departed!  
 From cowardice!  
 Like always!  
 He departed...  
 He went toward death!...  
 Without knowing why.  
 Like always.  
 And death came...  
 It came to dance in the world for five long years!  
 And it danced hideously in the muddy trenches of all parts of the world.  
 It danced with feet of lightning...  
 It danced and laughed...  
 It laughed and danced...  
 For five long years!  
 Ah! How vulgar is death that dances without having the wings of an idea on its back.  
 What an idiotic thing to die without knowing why...  
 We saw it when it danced — Death.  
 It was a black Death, without transparency of light.  
 It was a Death without wings!  
 How ugly and vulgar it was...  
 How clumsy was its dance.  
 But still it danced!  
 And how it mowed — dancing — all the superfluous and all of those of the majority. All those  
 for whom — says the great liberator — the state was invented.  
 But alas! It did not mow these alone...  
 Death — in order to avenge the state — has even mowed down those who are not worthless,  
 even those who are essential!...  
 But those who were not worthless, those who were not of the majority, those who have fallen  
 saying "no!"  
 They will be avenged.  
 We will avenge them.  
 We will avenge them because they are our brothers!  
 We will avenge them because they have fallen with stars in their eyes.  
 Because dying, they have drunk the sun.  
 The sun of life, the sun of struggle, the sun of an Idea.

## VI

What has the war renewed?  
Where is the heroic transfiguration of the spirit?  
Where have they hung the phosphorescent tables of the new values?  
In which temple have the holy amphoras of gold enclosing the luminous and blazing hearts of the supreme and creative heroes been laid?  
Where is the splendor of the great and new noon?  
Frightful rivers of blood washed all the turf and covered all the pathways of the world.  
Fearful torrents of tears made their heartbreaking lament echo across the eddies of all the earth: mountains of bone and human flesh everywhere blanched and everywhere rotted in the sun.  
But nothing was transformed, nothing evolved.  
The bourgeois belly merely belched from satiety and that of the proletarian cried out from too much hunger.  
And enough!  
With Karl Marx the human mind descended into the intestines.  
The roar that passes through the world today is a belly roar.  
Our will can transform it into a shout of the mind.  
Into a spiritual storm.  
Into a cry of free life.  
Into a hurricane of lightning.  
Our thunderbolt could unhinge the present reality, rip open the door to the unknown mystery of our longed-for dream and show the supreme beauty of the liberated man.  
Because we are mad forerunners of the time.  
The pyres.  
The beacons.  
The signals.  
The first announcements.

## VII

The war!  
Do you remember it?  
What has the war created?  
Here it is:  
The woman sold her body and called the prostitution “free love”.  
The man, who “dodged” to manufacture bullets and to preach the sublime beauty of the war, called his cowardice: “delicate artfulness and heroic cunning”.  
This one who always lived in unconscious infamy, in cowardice, in humility, in indifference and in weak renunciations, cursed against small audacities — which he had always detested — because by themselves they did not have the strength to prevent his belly from being torn apart by those weapons that he himself had constructed for a vile morsel of bread.  
Because even the beggars of the spirit — those who always remain outside to warm up while the more noble part of humanity enters into the hell of life — these humble and devoted servants

of their tyrant, these unconscious slanderers of superior minds, even these, we say, did not want to depart.

They did not want to die.

They writhed, they wept, they implored, they prayed!

But all this from a low instinct of impotent and bestial self-preservation, deprived of every heroic roar of revolt, and not instead from questions of a superior humanity, of refined depth of feeling, of spiritual beauty.

No, no, no!

Nothing of all that!

The belly!

Only the bestial belly.

Bourgeois ideal — proletarian ideal — the belly!

But in the meantime death came...

It came to dance in the world without having the wings of an idea on its back!

And it danced...

It danced and laughed.

For five long years...

And while on the borders wingless death danced drunk on blood, at home in the sacred apse of the internal front — in the vulgar “gazettes” of lies — the miraculous moral and material evolution of our women was recited and sung along with the spiritual peak that our heroic and glorious foot soldier ascended. The one who died weeping without knowing “why”.

How many ferocious lies, how much vulgar cynicism the grim minds of democratic society and of the state vomited in the “gazettes”.

Who remembers the war?

How the crows croaked...

The crows and the owls!

And meanwhile death danced!

It danced without having the wings of an idea on its back!

Of a dangerous idea that bears fruit and that creates.

It danced...

It danced and laughed!

And how it mowed — dancing — the superfluous. All those who were of the majority. Those for whom the state was invented.

But alas! It did not only mow these.

It also mowed those who had the rays of the sun in their eyes, those who had the stars in their pupils!

## VIII

Where is the epic art, the heroic art, the supreme art that the war promised us?

Where is the free life, the triumph of the new dawn, the splendor of noon, the festive glory of the sun?

Where is the redemption from material slavery?

Where is the one who has created the fine and profound poetry that had to germinate painfully in this tragic and fearful abyss of blood and death, in order to tell us the silent and cruel torture felt by the human mind?

Who has said the sweet and good word to us that calls a clear morning after a terrible night of hurricane?

Who has said the superior word that makes us great as our sorrow, pure in beauty and deep in humanity?

Who is, who ever is the genius who has known how to bend himself with love and faithfulness over the open wounds in the living flesh of our life, to receive all the noble tears from them so that the supreme laughter of the redeemer spirit could rend the claws from the starving monsters of our past errors in order to make us ascend to the concept of a superior ethic, where, through the luminous principle of human beauty purified in blood and sorrow, we could lift ourselves, strong and majestic — like an arrow taut on the bow of the will — to sing the deepest and gentlest melody of the highest of all our hopes to earthly life!

Where? Where?

I don't see it!

I don't feel it!

I look around me, but I see only vulgar pornography and false cynicism...

At least we could have been given a Homer of art, and a Napoleon of the acts of war.

A man who could have had the strength to destroy an epoch, to create a new history...

But nothing!

The war has given us neither great singers nor great rulers.

Only lying ghosts and grim parodies.

## IX

The war has passed washing history and humanity in tears and blood, but the epoch has remained unchanged.

An epoch of disintegration.

Collectivism is dying and individualism has not yet taken hold.

Nobody knows how to obey, nobody knows how to command.

But given all this, knowing how to live free, this is still at present an abyss.

An abyss that can only be filled up with the corpse of slavery and that of authority.

The war could not fill up this abyss. It could only dig it deeper. But what the war could not do, revolution must do.

The war has rendered humans more beastly and plebeian.

Coarser and uglier.

Revolution must render them better.

It must ennoble them.

## X

Already — socially speaking — we have slipped down the fatal slope, and there is no more possibility of turning back.

To attempt it alone would be a crime.  
 Not a great and noble crime however.  
 But a vulgar crime. A crime more than useless and vain. A crime against the flesh of our ideas.  
 Because we are not the enemies of blood...  
 We are the enemies of vulgarity!  
 Now that the age of obligation and slavery is agonizing, we want to close the cycle of theoretical and contemplative thought in order to open the breach to violent action, which is still the will of life and the exultation of expansion.  
 On the ruins of piety and religion we want to erect the creative hardness of our proud hearts.  
 We are not the admirers of the “ideal man” of “social rights, but the proclaimers of the “actual individual”, enemy of social abstractions.  
 We fight for the liberation of the individual.  
 For the conquest of life.  
 For the triumph of our idea.  
 For the realization of our dreams.  
 And if our ideas are dangerous, it is because we are those who love to live dangerously.  
 And if our dreams are mad, it is because we are mad. But our madness is supreme wisdom.  
 But our ideas are the heart of life; but our thoughts are the beacons of humanity.  
 And what the war has not done, revolution must do.  
 Because revolution is the fire of our will and a need of our solitary minds; it is an obligation of the libertarian aristocracy.  
 To create new ethical values.  
 To create new aesthetic values.  
 To communalize material wealth.  
 To individualize spiritual wealth.  
 Because we — violent cerebralists and passionate sentimentalists at the same time — understand and know that revolution is a necessity of the silent sorrow that suffers at the bottom and a need of the free spirits who suffer in the heights.  
 Because if the sorrow that suffers at the bottom wants rise with the happy smile of the sun, the free spirits who suffer in the heights no longer want to feel the petty offenses of the shame of vulgar slavery that surrounds them.  
 The human spirit is divided into three streams:  
 The stream of slavery, the stream of tyranny, the stream of freedom!  
 With revolution, the last of these streams needs to burst upon the other two and overwhelm them.  
 It needs to create spiritual beauty, teach the poor the shame of their poverty, and the rich the shame of their wealth.  
 All that is called “material property”, “private property”, “exterior property” needs to become what the sun, the light, the sky, the sea, the stars are for individuals.  
 And this will happen!  
 It will happen because we — the iconoclasts — will violate it!  
 Only ethical and spiritual wealth is invulnerable.  
 This is the true property of individuals. The rest no!  
 The rest is vulnerable! And all that is vulnerable will be violated!  
 It will be done by the unbiased might of the “I”.

By the heroic strength of the freed man.  
 And beyond every law, every tyrannical morality, every society, every conception of false humanity...  
 We must set our endeavor to transform the revolution that advances into “anarchist crime”, in order to push humanity beyond the state, beyond socialism.  
 Toward Anarchy!  
 If, with the war, people were not able to sublimate themselves in death, death has purified the blood of the fallen.  
 And the blood that death purified — and that the soil drank greedily — now cries from underground!  
 And we solitaires, we are not the singers of the belly, but the listeners to the dead; to the voice of the dead who cry from underground!  
 To the voice of the “impure” blood that is purified in death.  
 And the blood of the fallen cries!  
 Cries from under the ground!  
 And the cry of this blood calls us also toward the abyss...  
 It needs to be freed from its prison!  
 Oh, young miners, be ready!  
 We prepare the torches and paravanes.  
 It is necessary to till the earth.  
 It is time! It is time! It is time!  
 The blood of the dead must be freed from its prison.  
 It wants to rise from the shadowy depths to hurl itself toward the sky and conquer the stars.  
 Because the stars are the friends of the dead.  
 They are the good sisters who have seen them die.  
 They are the ones who go to their graves every night with feet of light and tell them: Tomorrow!...  
 And we — the children of tomorrow — have come today to tell you:  
 It is time! It is time! It is time!  
 And we have come at the hour before dawn...  
 In the company of the dawn and of the last stars!  
 And to the dead we have added more dead...  
 But all those who fall have a star of gold that shines in their pupil!  
 A star of gold that says:  
 “The cowardice of the remaining brothers is transformed into a creative dream, into avenging heroism.  
 Because if it were not so, one would not deserve to die!”  
 How sad it must be to die.  
 Without a hope in one’s heart... without a pyre in one’s brain; without a dream in one’s mind; without a star of gold shining in our pupil!

\* \* \*

The blood of the dead — our dead — cries from underground.

Clearly and distinctly, we hear that cry. That cry which intoxicates us with anguish and with sorrow.

And we cannot be deaf to that voice, nor do we want to... We.

We do not want to be deaf to it, because life has told us:

"Whoever is deaf to the voice of blood is not worthy of me. Because blood is my wine; and the dead my secret.

Only to the one who will listen to the voice of the dead will I unveil the enigma of my great mystery!"

And we will respond to this voice:

Because only those who know how to respond to the voice from the abyss can conquer the stars.

I address myself to you, oh my brother!

I address myself to you and tell you:

If you are among those who are kneeling in the half circle, close your eyes in the darkness and leap into the abyss.

Only in this way will you be able to bounce back to the highest peaks and open your great pupils wide in the sun."

Because one cannot be of the eagles if one is not of the divers.

One cannot soar to the peaks when one is incapable of the depths.

In the bottom, sorrow dwells, in the heights anguish.

Over the sunset of all the ages, a unique dawn rises between two different dusks.

In the midst of the virgin light of this unique dawn, the sorrow of the diver that is in us must be united to the anguish of the eagle that also lives in us, to celebrate the tragic and fruitful marriage of perpetual renewal.

The renewal of the personal "I" among the collective tempests and social hurricanes.

Because perennial solitude is only for saints who recognize in god their witness. But we are the atheist offspring of solitude.

We are the solitary demons without witness.

In the bottom, we want to live the reality of sorrow; in the heights, the sorrow of the dream...

In order to live all the battles, all the defeats, all the victories, all the dreams, all the sorrows and all the hopes intensely and dangerously.

And we want to sing in the sun; we want to howl in the winds!

Because our brain is a sparkling pyre where the great fire of thought crackles and burns in mad and joyful torments.

Because the purity of all dawns, the flame of all noons, the melancholy of all sunsets, the silence of all tombs, the hatred of all hearts, the murmur of all forests and the smile of all stars are the mysterious notes composing the secret music of our mind overflowing with vital exuberance.

Because in the depth of our heart we hear a voice speaking of human individuation, a voice so masterful and vigorous that, often times, while listening to it, we feel fear and terror.

Because the voice that speaks is His voice: the winged Demon from our depths.

## XI

By now, it is proven...

Life is sorrow!  
 But we have learned to love sorrow in order to love life!  
 Because in loving sorrow we have learned to struggle.  
 And in struggle — in struggle alone — is our joy of living.  
 To remain suspended halfway is not our task.  
 The half circle symbolizes the ancient “yes and no”.  
 The impotence of life and death.  
 It is the circle of socialism, of pity and of faith.  
 But we are not socialists...  
 We are anarchists. And individualists, and nihilists, and aristocrats.  
 Because we come from the mountains.  
 From close to the stars.  
 We come from the heights: to laugh and to curse!  
 We have come to light a forest of pyres upon the earth to illuminate it during the night which precedes the great noon.  
 And our pyres will be extinguished when the fire of the sun bursts majestically over the sea.  
 And if this day should not come, our pyres will continue to crackle tragically amidst the darkness of the eternal night.  
 Because we love all that is great.  
 We are the lovers of every miracle, the promoters of every prodigy, the creators of every wonder!  
 Yes: we know it!  
 For you, great things are in good as in evil.  
 But we live beyond good and evil, because all that is great belongs to beauty.  
 Even “crime”.  
 Even “perversity”.  
 Even “sorrow”.  
 And we want to be great like our crime!  
 In order not to slander it.  
 We want to be great like our perversity!  
 In order to render it conscious.  
 We want to be great like our sorrow.  
 In order to be worthy of it.  
 Because we come from the heights. From the home of Beauty. We have come to raise a forest of pyres upon the earth to illuminate it during the night which precedes the great noon.  
 Until the hour in which the fire of the sun bursts majestically over the sea.  
 Because we want to celebrate the feast of the great human prodigy.  
 We want our minds to vibrate in a new dream.  
 We want this tragic social dusk to give our “I” some calm and thrilling tinder of universal light.  
 Because we are the nihilists of social phantoms.  
 Because we hear the voice of the blood that cries from underground.  
 We prepare the paravanes and the torches, oh young miners. The abyss awaits us. We leap into it in the end: Toward the creative nothing.



## XII

Our nihilism is not christian nihilism.

We do not deny life.

No! We are the great iconoclasts of the lie.

And all that is declared “sacred” is a lie.

We are the enemies of the “sacred”.

And to you a law is “sacred”; a society “sacred”; a moral “sacred”; an idea “sacred”!

But we — the masters and lovers of pitiless strength and strong-willed beauty, of the ravishing idea — we, the iconoclasts of all that is consecrated — we laugh satanically, with a fine broad and mocking laughter.

We laugh!...

And laughing, we keep the bow of our pagan will to enjoy always strained toward the full integrity of life.

And we write our truths with laughter.

And we write our passions with blood.

And we laugh! .. .

We laugh the fine healthy and red laughter of hatred.

We laugh the fine blue and fresh laughter of love.

We laugh!

But laughing, we remember, with supreme gravity, to be the legitimate offspring and the worthy heirs of a great libertarian aristocracy that transmitted to us satanic outbursts of mad heroism in the blood, and waves of poetry, of solos, of songs in the flesh!

Our brain is a sparkling pyre, where the crackling fire of thought burns in joyful torments.

Our mind is a solitary oasis, always flowering and cheerful, where a secret music sings the complicated melody of our winged mystery.

And in our brain all the winds of the mountains cry to us; in our flesh all the tempests of the sea shout to us; all the Nymphs of Evil; our dreams are actual heavens inhabited by thrilling virgin muses.

We are the true demons of Life.

The forerunner of the time.

The first announcements!

Our vital exuberance intoxicates us with strength and with scorn.

It teaches us to despise Death.

## XIII

Today we have reached the tragic celebration of a great social dusk.

The twilight is red.

The sunset is bloody.

Anxiety flaps its throbbing wings in the wind.

Wings red with blood; wings black with death!

In the shadow Sorrow organized the army of her unknown children.

Beauty is in the garden of Life, and is weaving garlands of flowers to crown the brows of the heroes.

The free spirits have already hurled their thunderbolts across the twilight.

As first announcements of fire: first signals of war!

Our epoch is under the wheels of history.

Democratic civilization turns toward the grave.

Bourgeois and plebeian society is shattered fatally, inexorably! The fascist phenomenon is the most certain and irrefutable proof of it.

To demonstrate it, we would only need to go back in time and question history.

But there is no need for this!

The present speaks with abundant eloquence!

Fascism is nothing but the convulsive and cruel pang of a plebeian society, emasculated and vulgar, that agonizes tragically drowned in the quagmire of its flaws and of its own lies.

It — fascism — celebrates these its bacchanals with pyres of flame and wicked orgies of blood.

But from the gloomy crackle of its livid fires, it does not sparkle with even a single spark of vigorous, innovative spirituality, whereas the blood that it sheds transforms itself into wine that the forerunners of the time silently gather in the red chalices of hatred, addressing it as the heroic beverage in order to commune with all the offspring of social sorrow called to the twilight celebration of the dusk.

Because the great forerunners of the time are the brothers and the friends of the offspring of sorrow.

Of sorrow that struggles.

Of sorrow that rises.

Of sorrow that creates.

We will take these unknown brothers by the hand to advance together against all the “no” of denial, and to climb together toward all the “yes” of affirmation; toward a new spiritual dawn; toward new noons of life.

Because we are lovers of danger; the reckless ones in all undertakings, the conquerors of the impossible, the promoters and precursors of all “endeavors”!

Because life is an endeavor!

After the negating celebration of the social dusk, we will celebrate the rite of the “I”: the great noon of the complete and actual individual.

So that the night triumphs no more.

So that the darkness surrounds us no more.

So that the majestic fire of the sun perpetuates its feast of light in the sky and in the sea.

## XIV

Fascism is an obstacle much too ephemeral and impotent to hinder the course of human thought that bursts beyond every dam and overflows beyond every boundary, stirring action on its way.

Fascism is impotent because it is brute force.

It is matter without spirit; it is night without dawn.

Fascism is the other face of socialism.

Both of them are bodies without minds.

## XV

Socialism is the material force that, acting as the shadow of a dogma, resolves and dissolves in a spiritual “no”.

Fascism is a consumptive of the spiritual “no” that aims — wretch — at a material yes.

Both lack willful quality.

They are the bores of time; the temporizers of the deed!

They are reactionary and conservative.

They are crystallized fossils that the strong-willed dynamism of history that passes will sweep away together.

Because, in the willful field of moral and spiritual values, the two enemies are equal.

And it is well known that when fascism is born, socialism alone is its direct accomplice and responsible father.

Because, if when the nation, if when the state, if when democratic Italy, if when bourgeois society trembled in pain and agony in the knotty and powerful hands of the “proletariat” in revolt, socialism had not basely hindered the tragic deadly hold — losing the lamps of reason in front of its wide-opened eyes — certainly fascism would never even have been born, let alone lived.

But the awkward colossus without mind is then allowed to take hold — for fear that the vagabonds of the idea would push the movement of revolt beyond the appointed mark — in a most vulgar game of sullen conservative pity and false human love.

Thus, bourgeois Italy, instead of dying, brought forth...

It brought forth fascism!

Because fascism is the stunted and deformed creature born of the impotent love of socialism for the bourgeoisie.

One of them is the father, and the other the mother. But neither wants the responsibility for it.

Perhaps they find it a child much too monstrous.

And this is the reason they call it a “bastard”!

And it gets revenge.

Already wretched enough for being born this way, it rebels against the father and insults the mother...

And perhaps it has reason...

But we, we bring all this out for history.

For history and for truth, not for ourselves.

For us — fascism — is a poisonous mushroom planted quite well in the rotten heart of society, that is enough for us.

## XVI

Only the great vagabonds of the idea can — and must — be the luminous spiritual fulcrum of the tempestuous revolution, which advances in gloom upon the world.

Blood requires blood.

That is ancient history!  
 It can turn back no more.  
 To attempt to turn back — as socialism does — would be a useless and vain crime.  
 We must leap into the abyss.  
 We must answer the voice of the dead.  
 Of those dead who have fallen with immense stars of gold in their pupils.  
 It is necessary to cultivate the soil.  
 To free the blood from underground.  
 Because it wants to rise to the stars.  
 It wants to burn its good sisters, luminous and distant, who have seen them die.  
 The dead, our dead, speak:  
 “We have died with stars in our eyes.  
 We have died with rays of the sun in our pupils.  
 We have died with hearts swollen with dreams.  
 We have died with the song of the most beautiful hope in our mind.  
 We have died with the fire of an idea in our brain.  
 We have died...”  
 How sad death must be as the others died — not our dead — without all this in the brain, in the mind, in the heart, in the eyes, in the pupils!  
 Oh dead, oh dead! Oh our dead! Oh luminous torches! Oh burning beacons! Oh crackling pyres!  
 Oh dead...  
 Here it is, we are at twilight.  
 The tragic celebration of the great social dusk draws near.  
 Our great mind already opens toward the great subterranean light, oh dead!  
 Because we too have the stars in our eyes, the sun in our pupils, the dream in our heart, the song of hope in our mind and, in our brain, an idea.  
 Yes, we too, we too!  
 Oh dead, oh dead! Oh our dead! Oh torches! Oh beacons! Oh pyres!  
 We have heard you speak in the solemn silence of our deep nights.  
 You said:  
 “We wanted to ascend in the sky of the free sun...  
 We wanted to ascend in the sky of the free life...  
 We wanted to ascend up there where once the penetrating eyes of the pagan poet gazed:  
 Where the great thoughts arise and stand as inviolable oaks among the people; where beauty descends, invoked by the pure poets, and stands serene among the people; where love creates life and breathes joy!  
 Up above where life exults and expands in full harmony of splendor...  
 And for this, for this dream we struggled, for this great dream we died...  
 And our struggle was called crime.  
 But our ‘crime’ must only be considered as titanic valor, as promethean effort for liberation.  
 Because we are the enemies of all material domination and all spiritual leveling.  
 Because, beyond all slavery and every dogma, we saw life dance free and naked.  
 And our death must teach you the beauty of the heroic life!”  
 Oh dead, oh dead! Oh our dead...  
 We have heard your voice...

We have heard it speak this way in the solemn silence of our deep nights.  
 Deep, deep, deep!  
 Because we are sensitives.  
 Our heart is a torch, our mind is a beacon, our brain is a pyre!...  
 We are the soul of life!...  
 We are the predawn ones who drink the dew from the chalice of flowers.  
 But the flowers have glowing roots attached in the darkness of the earth.  
 In that earth which has drunk your blood.  
 Oh dead! Oh our dead!  
 This, your blood that cries, that roars, that wants to be freed from its prison to hurl itself toward the sky and conquer the stars!  
 Those, your remote and luminous sisters who have seen you die. And we — the vagabonds of the spirit, the solitaires of the idea — want our mind, free and great, to open its wings wide in the sun.  
 We want to celebrate the social dusk in this twilight of bourgeois society so that the final black night is made vermillion with blood.  
 Because the children of the dawn must be born of blood... Because the monsters of the darkness must be killed by dawn...  
 Because the new individual ideas must be born through social tragedies...  
 Because the new people must be forged in the fire!  
 And only from tragedy, from fire and from blood will the true, profound Antichrist of humanity and of thought be born.  
 The true child of the earth and the sun.  
 The Antichrist must be born of the smoking ruins of revolution to enliven the children of the new dawn.  
 Because the Antichrist is the one who comes from the abyss to rise beyond every boundary.  
 He is the strong-willed enemy of crystallization, of pre-establishment, of conservation!...  
 He is the one who will drive the human race through the mysterious cavern of the unknown to the perennial unveiling of new sources of life and of thought.  
 And we — the free spirits, the atheists of solitude, the demons of the desert without witness — have ourselves already pushed ourselves toward the most extreme peaks.  
 Because — with us — everything must be pushed to its maximum consequences.  
 Even Hatred.  
 Even violence.  
 Even crime!  
 Because Hatred gives strength.  
 Violence unhinges.  
 Crime renews.  
 Cruelty creates.  
 And we want to unhinge, to renew, to create!  
 Because everything that is dwarfed vulgarity must be overcome.  
 Because all that lives must be great.  
 Because all that is great belongs to beauty!  
 And life must be beautiful!

## XVII

We have killed “duty” so that our ardent desire for free brotherhood acquires heroic valor in life.

We have killed “pity” because we are barbarians capable of great love.

We have killed “altruism” because we are generous egoists.

We have killed “philanthropic solidarity” so that the social man unearths his most secret “I” and finds the strength of the “Unique”.

Because we know it. Life is tired of having stunted lovers.

Because the earth is tired of feeling itself trampled by long phalanxes of dwarfs chanting christian prayers.

And finally, because we are tired of our brothers, carcasses incapable of peace and of war. Inferior to hatred and to love.

We are tired and disgusted.

Yes, quite tired: quite disgusted!

And then that voice of the dead...

Of our dead!

The voice of the blood that cries from underground!

Of the blood that wants to free itself from its prison to hurl itself toward the sky and conquer the stars!

Those stars that — blessing them — sparkled in their pupils at in the final moment of death, transforming their dreamy eyes into vast discs of gold.

Because the eyes of the dead — of our dead — are discs of gold.

They are luminous meteors that wander the infinite to point out the way to us.

The way without end that is the pathway to eternity.

The eyes of our dead tell us the “why” of life, showing us the secret fire that burns in our mystery. In that our secret mystery that nobody has sung up to now...

But today the twilight is red...

The sunset is covered with blood...

We are close to the tragic celebration of the great social dusk. Already, on the bells of history, time has struck the first predawn strokes of a new day.

Enough, enough, enough!

It is the hour of the social tragedy!

We will destroy laughing.

We will set fires laughing.

We will kill laughing.

We will expropriate laughing.

And society will fall.

The fatherland will fall.

The family will fall.

All will fall after the free man is born.

The one is born who has learned the Dionysian art of joy and laughter through tears and sorrow.

The hour has come to drown the enemy in blood...

The hour has come to wash our minds in blood.

Enough, enough, enough!  
As the poet transforms his lyre into a dagger!  
As the philosopher transforms his probe into a bomb!  
As the fisherman transforms his oar into a formidable ax.  
As the miner comes up from the unbearable caves of the dark mines armed with his shining  
iron.  
As the farmer transforms his fruitful spade into a war lance.  
As the laborer transforms his hammer into a scythe and cleaver.  
And forward, forward, forward.  
It is time, it is time — it is time!  
And society will fall.  
The fatherland will fall.  
The family will fall.  
All will fall after the Free Man is born.  
Forward, forward, forward, oh joyful destroyers.  
Beneath the black edge of death we will conquer Life!  
Laughing!  
And we will make it our slave!  
Laughing!  
And we will love it laughing!  
Since the only serious people are those who know how to be actively engaged laughing.  
And our hatred laughs...  
Red laughter. Forward!  
Forward, for the destruction of the lie and of the phantoms! Forward, for the complete conquest  
of individuality and of Life!

# Cry of Rebellion

But if Socrates and Christ by their senseless deaths had to undergo horrendous bloody suffering, then wouldn't all revolutions fought in their names be equally bloody and senseless? The victory of Christianity over the enviable paganism, the establishment of republics, the conquests of empires, the liberal, constitutional or absolute monarchies and democracies — were they not all consequences of the bloody torrents of war and revolution? The violent pulse of all revolutions fought in the name of ancient phantoms in order to erect new phantoms...

What possible value could these phantoms have for me, the iconoclast, the killer of phantoms, the shatterer of idols old and new? And what possible benefit could the triumph of Christianity have for me since I am the anti-christian *par excellence*? And what about the republics, monarchies and all forms of society that can only accept me as a "Christian", a "subject", a "citizen", a "member", etc., etc.? All forms of society have systems to do one thing: Equalize! And all forms of society consider themselves the perfect one. And it is this dogma of perfection that obstructs the restless rebel who refuses to bow to its new god... And I'm so revolutionary that I barely recognize myself. And do you know why I am a barely recognizably revolutionary? Because I am guided only by the tremendous and unstoppable impulse of MY desire to expand the force of my own will. I am not guided by phantoms, I do my own walking: it is not the illusion of a perfect society or the universal redemption of humanity, but the absolute need to affirm my potential in spite of all other forces.



# My Opinions

## God

The creation of a sick fantasy. Inhabitant of senile and impotent brains. Companion and comforter of rancid spirits born to slavery. A pill for constipated minds. Marxism for the faint of heart.

## Humanity

An abstract word with a negative connotation, long on power, short on truth. An obscene mask painted on the mean face of a shrewd vulgarian for the purpose of dominating the multitude of sentimentalist idiots and imbeciles.

## Country

Penal servitude for the semi-intelligent, a cowshed of imbecility. A Circe who transforms her adoring fans into dogs and pigs. A prostitute for the master, a pimp of the foreigner. Child-eater, parent-slanderer and scoffer at heroes.

## Family

The denial of love, life and liberty.

## Socialism

Discipline, discipline; obedience, obedience; slavery and ignorance, pregnant with authority. A bourgeois body grotesquely fattened by a vulgar christian creature. A medley of fetishism, sectarianism and cowardice.

## Organizations, Legislative Bodies and Unions

Churches for the powerless. Pawnshops for the stingy and weak. Many join to live parasitically off the backs of their card — carrying simpleton colleagues. Some join to become spies. Others, the most sincere, join to end up in jail from where they can observe the mean — spiritedness of all the rest.

## Solidarity

The macabre altar used by capable comedians of all sort to display their priestly talent for reciting masses. The beneficiaries pay nothing less than 100% humiliation.

## **Friendship**

Fortunate are those who have drunk from its chalice without having their souls offended or poisoned. If one such person exists, I urge them to send me their photograph. I'm sure to look upon the face of an idiot.

## **Love**

Deception of the flesh and damage to the spirit. Disease of the soul, atrophy of the brain, weakening of the heart, corruption of the senses, poetic lies from which one gets ferociously inebriated two or three times a day in order to consume this precious but stupid life more quickly. And yet I would prefer to die of love. It's the only swindler, after Judas, that can kill with a kiss.

## **Man**

A filthy paste of servitude, tyranny, fetishism, fear, vanity — and ignorance. The greatest offence one can commit against an ass is to call it a man.

## **Woman**

The most brutal of enslaved beasts. The greatest victim shuffling on earth. And, after man, the most responsible for her problems. I'd be curious to know what goes through her mind when I kiss her.

## Excerpt from *Vertices*

“We absolutely feel we are beyond all isms and theories. We will suppress the works of all nitwits and all scribblers who, by affiliating with the schools of the avant-garde, try to impose themselves on more original minds. We will absolutely refuse all works of purely technical virtuosity unless they serve to express an aesthetic rebellion. Dark, virgin. forces, laughing ravagers of the impossible, audacious explorers of the highest peaks and of the abyss, let’s thunder our howl of beauty to squash the verminous swarms of the stinking feeble-minded.”

I don’t announce or promise anything. There are too many lying prophets who make pronouncements on the possibility of a new life; and there are even more vulgarians who promise the world new christs with their unredeemed blood... Who are they? I don’t know! I can’t explain!... I know I am a mixture of modesty, pride, wisdom and ignorance, of virtue, cowardice and heroism, light and gloom, logic and absurdity. I am suspended above an abyss of unexplored depth with my eye fixed on a distant peak that may be nothing more than an illusion. I know that within me are sunlit and blossoming summits like fantastic summer gardens. I also know that there are dark hidden caverns that will never see the light of day.

I have found some friends who resemble me to some extent insofar as I resemble them to some extent and we have come together to build a crystalline house on the rocks of a vertex. But this is not why we consider ourselves gods. And there are eagles and there are snakes who, like the gods, love the virgin heights... and we are among them as well. We are all creatures, but creatures of the peaks, crouched together between the symbolic shrubs of a truly free art form. We will cultivate poisonous flowers of pure beauty in spite of the impish apes who live in the lowest marshlands of society and who will hurl their impotent curses toward our nest of violent hermits.

I’ve concluded my statement, but I haven’t yet defined myself. I know that anyone, even the most humble of mortals, has the right to make a statement of this kind. But I also believe that aside from having the right, the true genius should regard it as an absolute duty.

## *Iconoclasts, Forward*

History, materialism, monism, positivism and all the isms of this world are old and rusty tools which I don't need or mind anymore. My principle is life and my end is death. I wish to live my life intensely and embrace my death tragically.

You are waiting for the revolution? Let it be! My own began a long time ago! When you are ready (god, what an endless wait!) I won't mind going with you for a while. But when you stop, I shall continue on my way toward the great and sublime conquest of the nothing!

Any society that you build will have its limits. And outside the limits of any society, unruly and heroic tramps will wander with their wild and virgin thought — those who cannot live without planning ever new and dreadful outbursts of rebellion! I shall be among them!

And after me, as before me, there will be those saying to their fellows: "So turn to yourselves rather than to your gods and idols. Find what hides within you and bring it to the light; show yourselves!"

Because every person who, searching his own inwardness, extracts what was mysteriously hidden therein is a shadow eclipsing any form of society which can exist under the sun!

All societies tremble when the scornful aristocracy of tramps, inaccessible, unique ones, rulers over the ideal and conquerors of the nothing resolutely advances. So, come on, iconoclasts, forward!

*Already the foreboding sky grows dark and silent!*

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Renzo Novatore  
Toward the Creative Nothing  
1924

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# Towards the Hurricane

Renzo Novatore

1919

Until the day will come we remain highheaded and all that which we can do we  
won't allow to be done before us

— W.Goethe

We make the pen red hot in the volcanic fire of the spirit of our negating; We dip it in our vigorous heart, swollen with rebellious blood and, in the atheist light of our spirit, we write, we write... We write then, rapidly, without going through literary research, without repugnant theoretical ideologies, without bigots and the sentimental mush from hysterics and politicians, wrapped only in the mantle of our furious passion!

We write only words of blood, of fire and of light!

Screech, graze o my coarse pen of fire and of energy upon the white candor of this sheet, as a viper tongue grazes upon the tender throat of an innocent child to give him, with venom, death. Away, get away from me me all the ideology, the theosophy, the philosophy dogmatic and political; distance from me every preestablished system: it has all fallen incinerated under the corroding flames of my negating spirit.

I am the perfect nihilist, the radical atheist.

It is not only from today, no, what I have found, what I have uncovered, that I know that the unique, the only, the most beautiful frame within that which stands out free, solemn and majestic the superb human Individuality is the Nothing, the true Nothing!

Not one lurid prison more will ever be able to lock up this rebel and iconoclast spirit of mine; yet today less than ever!

Today which the enormous bell of time has sounded and has sounded yes strong blows to break hardest neck from the plebeian idiot is from the Nothing that must jump furious outside the burning phalanxes of the black flames that, in the passionate impetus of the spontaneous revolt will constitute the crackling column of fire of which, preceding in front of the people, will give the first announcement of the final destruction. This is the hour of the feverish bitterness, of the terrible anxiety!

This is the hour that precedes the divine hour of the imminent tragedy, which will give us the heroic Death and the heroic Greatness.

O blessed hour that gives me all feverish intensity of the spirit, I love you! I won't give the bitterness that you gave me for all the mediocre sweetness of the world; I won't give the fever

that hammers my temple, that burns my temple, that burns my forehead, for the tranquility and the peace of all the vile humans!

O Satan inspire me! You inspire me O my divine brother!

Give me the infernal power to ignite all those virgin spirits that have still not been buried in the dunghill of fallacious theories; Make that I can tighten around me an bold handful of lovers of heroic and libertarian Greatness or Heroic Death.

But they will be! They must be! Those of fearful soul are there tranquilly to march in accompaniment of their stupid saints and the old cretinous good god!

But we march!

It has reached the hour to march for all those who, dominating the ideal, have become symbol and incarnation. Wrapped in the divinity of our torment, we will proceed in advance and, with the example of the facts, we will indicate to the men which are the ways that conduct towards the new light! We will fall? No Matter! We want the liberation from this stupid life of humility, of slavery, of servility, where man we must walk on his knees and the spirit speaks subdued, in a low voice, like a prayer.

We must kill the christian philosophy in the most radical sense of the word. How much mostly goes sneaking inside the democratic civilization (this most cynically ferocious form of christian depravity) and it goes more towards the categorical negation of human Individuality. "Democracy! By now we have comprised it that it means all that says Oscar Wilde Democracy is the people who govern the people with blows of the club for love of the people".

Against all that is sounded the hour of insurgence and not with only some unpleasant and repugnant theoretic bleat of the lambs...

Much more is wanted in this bloody twilight of a civilization that has had its time!

Either the Death or a new Dawn where the Individuality lives above every thing.

I have forgotten everything, indeed not forgotten: surpassed (and I know it with what torment), also the insurpassable love for my Companion and the adoration for my child. My books my beloved books which are above every other thing I loved now sleep far away yonder, far away from me; perhaps yonder in the old house, within a large chest, perhaps covered with dust, perhaps bathed in the tears of my beloved Companion.

But also the love for you, o my beloved books, o luminous torches of my thought, is surpassed! Today I feel within me something more strong than all the loves, that kisses my soul with all the heat of an irresistible fascination...

On the fragments of all that that I have destroyed with the negation, a new faith is reborn. The faith of the impossible rendered possible from my negation, or the ultimate purification, how true, that is found between the burning flames of the final catastrophe, tragic and redeeming. Today I try a single hour of furious anarchy and, for that hour I will give all of my dreams, all of my loves, all of my life. But that hour will come! Oh, it will come! And if it mustn't come I will give voluntarily into the cannibal hands of that idiotic and beastly society that already has presented me a magnificent sentence of death (in order that I be remembered to possess superior ideas which are worthy for teaching that the divine freedom of the I is something more beautiful and more great than their bestial war) and I would cynically shoot in sign of the deepest contempt against myself and the unnameable cowardice of all humans. Giving a salute to the revived "Libertario" and the next social insurrection, I fraternally grasp the hand of the true rebels of all the varied tendencies!

Today it is eve of Action! From the first sparks I will be beside you.

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Renzo Novatore  
Towards the Hurricane  
1919

[www.scribd.com](http://www.scribd.com)  
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# Twilight Dance

Renzo Novatore

unknown

This is the hour of my nocturnal thoughts.  
My Demon sleeps.  
Sleeps in the dark twilight.  
of this soul of mine  
The red Demon  
of my infernal joy.  
I Smoke...  
I Smoke desperately,  
intensely. Always!  
Always! Always! Always!  
I wished to think, to write, to sing...  
But my Demon sleeps.  
Sleeps in the dark twilight  
of this soul of mine  
The red Demon  
of my infernal joy.  
And the thoughts do not come...  
Not even the laughter and the malediction!  
And this is my black hour  
Of black melancholy

\* \* \*

I watch, distractedly, my cigarette.  
Slender, pallid and warm  
Like a sick lover.  
I watch it being consumed very slowly  
like my life and my dreams:  
like the life and the dreams of all my brothers.  
The ash fell to earth and dispersed. So!  
The smoke, it raises, dense and gray, in the air  
and is dispersed also. So.  
For me naught remains  
but a bit of yellow nicotine on the loving lips. So.

\* \* \*

My Demon sleeps.  
Sleeps in the dark twilight  
of this soul of mine  
The red Demon  
of my infernal joy.  
I watch the Sun!  
I see it descend between the blond whirlpool  
of a beautiful sea of gold.  
Of gold and of blood...  
But my heart is bitten.  
Bitten by a frigid plant  
without hopes and tears,  
without hatred and without love.  
Oh, you could at least cry...  
you could at least curse...  
But, no!  
No! no! no!

\* \* \*

Who?  
Who ever therefore has made me so bad?  
Who is the evil craftsman  
of this my suffering?  
Oh mother... my mother...  
If still you had the force  
of being able at least to curse...  
But, no!  
No! No! No!  
Nevertheless it was you only  
you! Who  
have given me life,  
Who have given me pain,  
Who have given me Evil!  
But tell me:  
You believed perhaps in the joy of living?  
I am therefore the son of such a grotesque dream?  
Or am I just a most vulgar son  
of the collective unconsciousness?  
But why then, oh mother,  
didn't you have  
- that day -  
the heroic inspiration to strike  
VIOLENTLY  
your swollen stomach  
over a hard stone. So!  
Because I wouldn't have willed to see  
The Sun.  
Because I wouldn't have willed  
This miserable life.  
Because I suffer such, So...  
O mother, you cry?  
And why?  
You feel perhaps the remorse  
of having created me?  
Imagine perhaps the evil  
that torments me and breaks me  
so terribly?  
Oh, you had at least the force  
Of being able to to curse...  
But, no!  
No! No! No!  
They are too vile!

\* \* \*

The river flows and sings...  
(the beautiful river tranquil and laughing)  
Flows over its fine bed  
Of wet dust  
and its white foams  
are a golden quilt.  
The titanic reef  
washes its granitic flanks  
within your terse waters  
- o solitary river -  
and seated at your banks  
I  
watch the green leaves  
which, embroidered of shadow and of light,  
the wind caresses. So!  
I watch. Think and remember...  
But my soul is dark  
and, all around me,  
the evening cries. Black.  
I love no more.  
I no longer believe!

\* \* \*

Who?  
Who ever therefore has made me so bad?  
The women and Love?  
The men and friendship?  
The society and its law?  
The humanity and its faith?  
Perhaps them all!  
Perhaps none of them!  
I don't know...  
I feel so bad...  
So Much! So Much! So Much!  
Here... in the soul!

\* \* \*

My Demon sleeps.  
sleeps in the dark twilight  
of this soul of mine  
How much is sad... Sad and melancholy.

\* \* \*

I wish for new friends.  
For true new friends.  
I need to confide  
(to someone)  
my black melancholies.  
But I do not have friends  
I am alone!  
Alone with my  
MELANCHOLIES  
Alone with my Destiny.  
Alone, So alone!

\* \* \*

My Demon sleeps.  
My brain is shot through  
by a Memory.  
Memory of a dream.  
Dream of youth:  
“Men strong and happy,  
embrace you, you entwine  
with nude bodies of women  
beautiful, joyous and happy,  
you are celebrated and glorified  
by children innocent and happy.  
Then:  
Flowers and sun.  
Music and dances.  
Stars and poetry.  
Songs and love”.

\* \* \*

My Demon sleeps.  
My brain is shot through  
By the rays yellowish  
black and greenish  
of the filthy reality!  
Of the reality that passes...  
“a blend of brutes and of brutal.  
A compound of hypocrisy and ignorance.  
A mixture of cowardice and lies.  
A totality of dung and mud”.  
Ah, no!  
No! No! No!  
I suffer such!  
So Much! So Much! So Much!

\* \* \*

The sun is setting.  
(the beautiful sun of gold)  
the Angels of the evening  
are agonizing...  
The green leaves are skulls of the dead,  
cold, laughing scornfully...  
The river  
(the beautiful terse river)  
is now a black serpent  
frightfully distended between the masses of the reef.  
Tomb gloomy and mute.  
Tomb gloomy and black.

\* \* \*

My cigarette is extinguished...  
(my cigarette pallid and warm  
like a sick lover)  
The ash is dispersed.  
The smoke as well.  
To me naught remains but a bit  
of yellow nicotine  
on the loving lips:  
Like of the life and of the dreams. So!

\* \* \*

Within the dark twilight  
Of my soul  
My red Demon arouses itself.  
I feel like a rivulet of bitter blood  
flowing over loving lips...  
I have a tragic premonition...  
What will happen in the night?  
But... the stars  
the  
dear stars they  
will see  
Oh, if you could again once more  
only laugh and curse...  
But I see a sinister flash (a pyre?)  
Shining in the darkness of the night.  
I must STRIKE!  
I feel...  
I feel! I feel! I feel!  
I am a star who turns  
towards a tragic sunset.

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Renzo Novatore  
Twilight Dance  
unknown

[www.scribd.com](http://www.scribd.com)

Symphonic prelude to "DYNAMITE", By Renzo Novatore (Abele Ferrari), date of composition unknown). Translated by Luther Blissett 2009. Renzo Novatore writes about the sadness and alienation of everyday life in this poem touching on themes of love turned sour and the cruelty of being born into a hostile and oppressive world.

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# Wild Flowers

Renzo Novatore

September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1917

Premise. Even through the exterminated moor of the barren desert flowers germinate. Wild flowers that emanate sinful perfumes and that stick their thorns to bloody the same hands of those who collect them, but yet they that have their grandiose history of joy, of pain and of love. I repeat: they are flowers strange and savage that arose from the creative nothing, were fertilized by the sun and later slammed by the hurricane, cruelly so!

These flowers are thoughts germinating in the meditative solitude and deep in my spirit while towards the outside, in the world that no longer belongs to me the madness rages furiously furrowed from the electrifying fire of the lightning that breaks implacable.

And I, impenitent vagabond, who loves to gallop in the joyous and frightening ways of this my solitary kingdom and desert, I feel sorry to periodically collect a bundle of these wild flowers to crown this rebel flag that once already cowardly and brutally demolished sings still for the joyful refrain of eternal return.

\* \* \*

The Anarchist is only one who after a long, gasping and desperate search has retrieved his own self and has placed it, haughty and proud “on the margins of the society”, denying anything the right to judge it. The one who knows not to recognize the loftiness of his own actions, him only judging himself, can even be believed anarchic but is not!

The force of will and potency (not to be confused with power) of the spirit of autoelevation and individualization are the first steps of a long and interminable ladder if the one knows that he wills to exceed even himself above all things.

Only the one who knows to prize with impetuous violence the rusty gates that close the house of the great lie where the lubricious thieves of I have given to convene, (God, state, societies, humanity) to retrieve from the viscid and rapacious hands adorning with the false gold of the love of piety and of civility, of the sinister predators, their most grand treasure, can feel boss and signore of himself, and be called anarchic.

\* \* \*

The anarchist, beyond being the most grand rebel also has the virtue of being a King. The King of himself, understand!!

Who believes that Christ can be the sign and the symbol that man must wave in order to reach the libertarian synthesis of life, cannot they be a Socialist or a christian negator of anarchism.

When Socrates, who in spite of everything was without a doubt much superior to the bestiality of those his people who condemned him, accepted the hemlock that they imposed him to gulp down, he made one work of such cowardice and of devotion that anarchism pitilessly condemns.

\* \* \*

To escape, with whatever means, to the invincible bestiality of a people rendered ferocious and brutal from cannibal prejudices and frightful ignorance, or to sadistic deprivation of a putrefying society which is believed to have the right to judge and to condemn a single person because they have consummated a given action that the aforesaid society is not at the loftiness to ever understand; it is an act superbly rebellious and individualistic that only in anarchism can find its reason for being and its glorification.

\* \* \*

Alas! Even the conscience has been in the end a phantom atavistic and frightening. And it will only stop being so when man will have the knowledge to render it the image and the mirror of his own and only will.

\* \* \*

The first man who said: "There is not any God", was without a doubt an athlete of human thought. But the one who was limited to saying that: "The of God the priest is not", cheated in equivocally leaving sufficient comprise to being, him, a suspicious partisan that already premeditated to kill the humans perhaps with a new lie. Keep yourselves well guarded from those who are limited to the sole negation of God.

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Renzo Novatore  
Wild Flowers  
September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1917

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Blissett.

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